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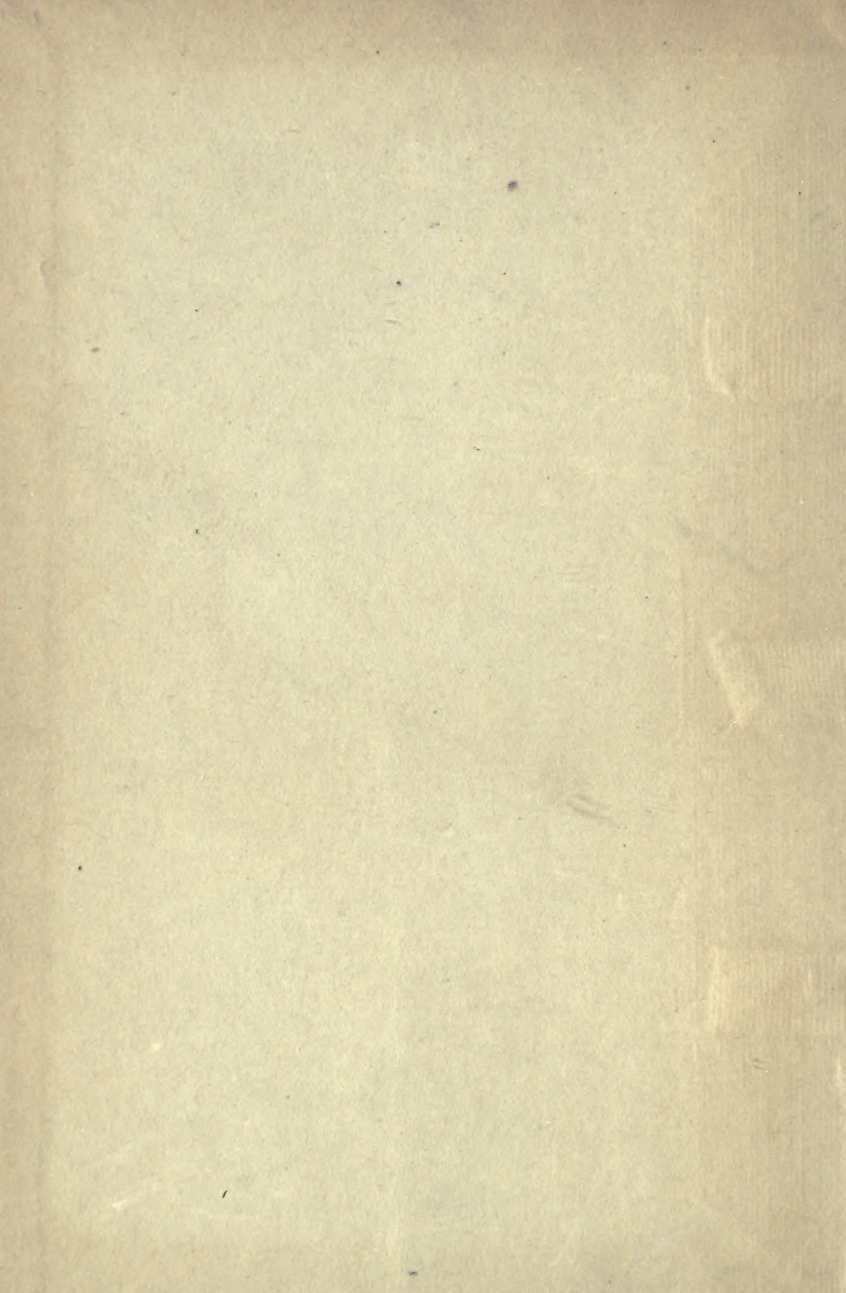
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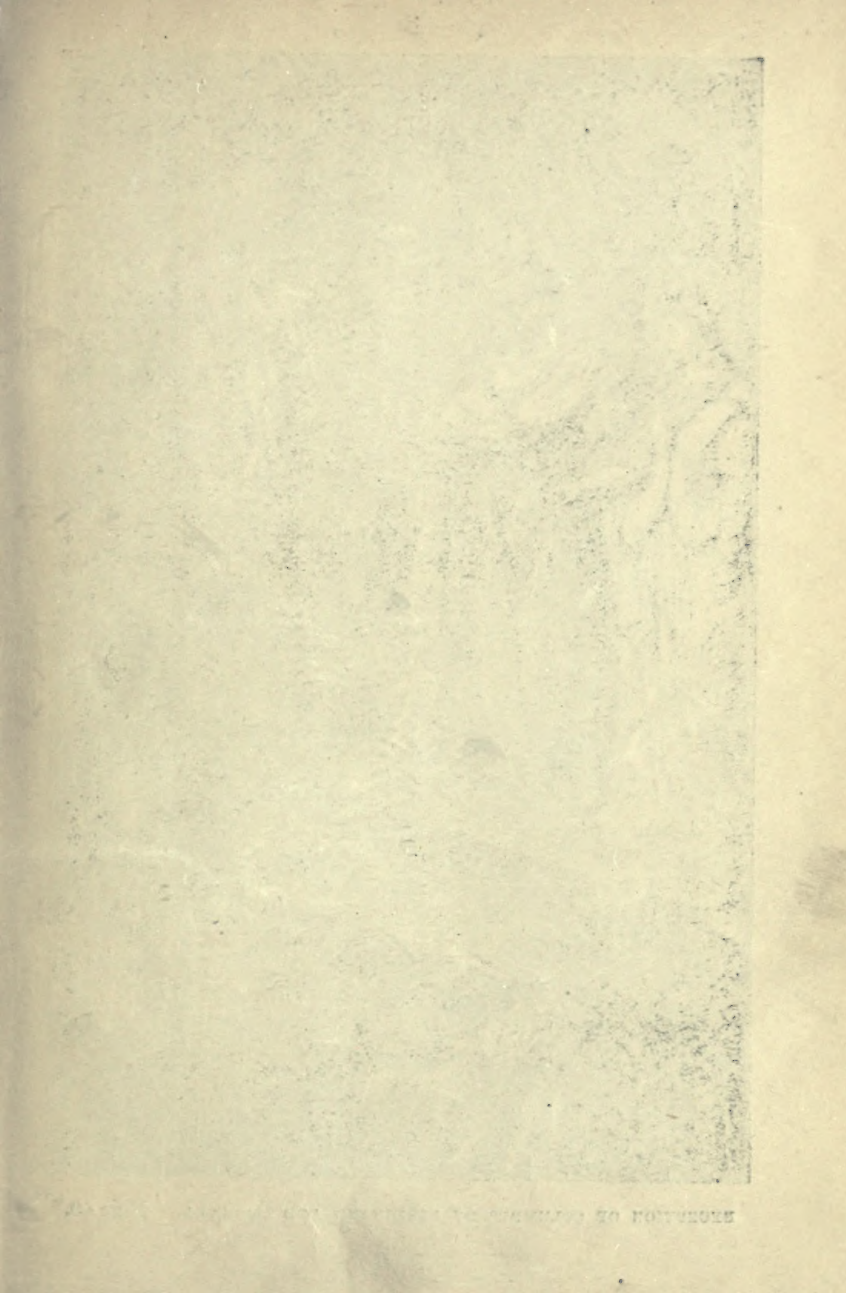
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RECEPTION OF COLUMBUS BY FERDINAND AND ISABELLA. *Page 49.*

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THE LIFE OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

BY
SARAH CROMPTON

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF SOME OF THE
FOLLOWERS OF COLUMBUS



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THE LIFE OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE OF COLUMBUS.

"I live to learn their story
Who've suffered for my sake,
To emulate their glory,
And follow in their wake;
Bards, patriots, martyrs, sages,
The noble of all ages,
Whose deeds crowned history's pages,
And Time's great volume make."

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS was born about the year 1447, in Genoa, a sea-port town of Italy. He had three brothers and a sister, all younger than himself.

When a child he was taught to read and write, and draw, and thus he had means by which to earn his bread.

After a time, Christopher went to study at the city of Pavia, and there he began to learn all that was then known about lands and seas, and the use of maps and

figures. He used also to watch the stars, and soon learnt much about them.

The wish of his heart and soul was to go to sea. At that time very few sailors dared to go far out of sight of land; but some were brave enough to sail along the coast of Africa, and after a time (about 1470) they reached its south point, which we call—as they did—the Cape of Good Hope.

What the boy knew of maps made him strive to learn all that could be told by those who had seen more in the world than the map-makers ever heard of. Columbus had but little to live upon, and still less to spend, for any books that he wanted. Like most of those whom we rightly call GREAT MEN, he had to make up for the want of means by his strong will to dare and do noble things.

For a short time after he left Pavia he helped in his father's trade of wool-combing; but when he was only fourteen years old he first went to sea.

In the year 1470, his ship put into the port of Lisbon. Columbus was then in the vigour of youth. He was tall and well made, plain in dress, and his wants were very few. He was beloved, and made welcome by all who knew him. He married the daughter of a brave sea-captain, who had lately died; and the young couple went to live with the widow in Lisbon. They were very happy, though poor.

In an old chest in this house, the papers and maps of the wife's father were found, with notes of all that he had seen and done by sea and land in the course of a busy life-time. His wife's sister was also married to a sea-captain, and thus Columbus lived in the very midst

of all that could excite him to go on, and do more than those brave men who had been the first to sail beyond the land then known.

Columbus read, over and over again, all the books which gave the last and best accounts of the world then known, and amidst the wild tales which sailors love to tell, he was able to glean some new facts, which made him sure there was land in the far west; or at least, that India might be found by sailing on and on to the west, across the wide ocean which holds no track on its wild, stormy waves.

Much that every child is taught to know in these later days, Columbus could only find out by his own deep thought.

In the first place, he had to make out, with no doubt in his own mind, that the earth is round, like an orange, and that men are to be found in every part, walking on the outside of it, foot to foot, as we may say.

One of the many reasons that made Columbus think there was land in the far west, was, that the pilots (those men who guide ships in or out of port) had told him about logs of wood, not like any known trees, and pieces, too, of carved wood, which had been thrown up after storms from the west, on islands in the ocean; and once, the bodies of two dead men were thrown up, and their faces were not like any men ever seen before.

As Columbus had found a home in Lisbon, he thought it right to make the King of Portugal an offer of his services. King John did not treat Columbus well, for when trusted by him with all his maps and plans, the king made use of them in secret, and sent a ship to try the course that Columbus had in mind.

But the captains of King John did not care to risk their lives or their ships, and soon came back, saying, "it was of no use to try, for land could not be found there." This was told to Columbus, who then knew what had been done by stealth, and in disgust he left Lisbon, to try his fate elsewhere.

His wife died, and he did not care to stay in what had been their happy home.

He set off at once, to travel on foot, taking with him a young and only child, whose name was Diego.

Columbus went to his native city, where his father, who was then an aged man, still lived, and warm was the welcome in "the old house at home."

The people of Genoa were too poor to help Columbus in what they thought a wild scheme; but this did not change his mind in the least.

Having done what he could to provide for the comfort of his father, Columbus bade him farewell—a last farewell on earth, as they both thought and felt it would be.

With young Diego,* the patient Columbus set forth again, going from court to court, and from one king and prince to another; but though he had the hope of a new world to offer, it was long before he could get any one to listen to him.

* Pronounce this name *D'yāgo*.

CHAPTER II.

HE VISITS THE KING AND QUEEN OF SPAIN.

"These signs have marked me extraordinary,
And all the courses of my life do show,
I am not in the roll of common men."

SHAKESPEARE.

ABOUT two miles from Palos, a small sea-port in the south of Spain, a convent may yet be seen. It is now about 400 years since a stranger went up to its gates to ask for a piece of bread and a cup of cold water, for a faint and weary child. This was freely given; and whilst they stood to receive it, the head of the house came by, and after kind words of welcome he began to talk with the stranger, who was no other than Columbus, glad to tell how many things he had seen, and what great thoughts were in his mind about the way to seek a new world.

The Prior (as this good man was called) sent for a friend of his who was wise in such matters, and they both felt sure that Columbus had good reasons for his grand ideas. The Prior's zeal then grew so strong, that he wished that his own King should give Columbus the means for going to seek the new land, so that when found, it might belong to Spain. He wrote a letter

for Columbus to take to a convent at Madrid, where lived a Prior who saw the King and Queen of Spain every day in their private hours.

In the spring of the year 1486, Columbus went on his errand, and left his son Diego to the care of kind friends at Palos, who said they would teach and keep him until his father's return.

Columbus found the King and Queen, and the city, full of joy for a victory over the Moors, a brave nation, then almost driven out of Spain after many years of warfare.

The King was good-looking and clever, but he was cold and selfish in his nature. The Queen, Isabella, was loved by all who knew her. We read of her as "fair in face, with a sweet and modest look in her clear blue eyes." Her mind was firm, and she was ever in earnest to do right. She had a true and open heart, and was noble in thought and action. She loved all her people, and did all she could to soften harsh laws, and to spread peace and comfort in the homes of the poor.

Columbus gave his letter to the Prior, who only looked on him as a stranger, poorly clad, and with no grand friends to help him on.

The court at that time was like a great camp; war was still going on, and king, queen, and people, could think of little else. The Prior himself was also much taken up with these worldly matters.

For six months Columbus waited, and earned his bread by making maps. He trusted to time and his own efforts for making friends. He had to bear the scorn of many who were thought to be wise men; and he was always laughed at by those who were foolish. His mind was strong, and faith in a good cause bore him

up through every trial. The calm and truthful way in which he spoke, gained him friends in due time.

At last, Columbus was made known to a great man at court, and also to a Cardinal, the head of the Church. This good man was afraid, at first, that Columbus went against the Bible, by saying that the world is round; but then, again, he thought there could be nothing wrong in trying to know more of the wonders of this earth we live on, so he gave his whole mind to hear all that Columbus had to say.

This Cardinal saw at once how grand were the ideas set before him, and the great force of the reasons for them. From that time he was the sure friend of Columbus.

One day the Cardinal took Columbus with him on a visit to the King and Queen. He stood before them, as he stood before all other men, with modest manners and with presence of mind, for he felt (as we find he wrote soon after in a letter) "a strength not his own in the work set before him."

The King was a keen judge, and saw that Columbus was the man to do great things; that he was brave, bold, and wise, and that there was nothing rash in his plans. Ferdinand, for that was the name of the king, always took care to be on the safe side, and would give no promise, but said he would call a council and leave it in their hands.

This meeting took place at the Convent of St. Stephen, in Salamanca, where Columbus was then staying, and where he was treated well, and every care taken for his comfort.

In those days the most learned men lived in convents,

shut out from the world, and all they knew was from books, and books only. Before some of these learned men the poor sailor stood forth. He had long borne with the ignorant, and had been patient with the stupid, but now he hoped these wiser men would hear and listen to him.

It was not so. Most of them were set against his words beforehand, and said it was absurd for one poor sailor to think he knew more than the most able captains. Instead of looking at maps and charts, they quoted texts from the Bible, and short sayings from the books of the Saints, to prove him so wicked, that both ships and crew would be burnt up if they went past the Line, where the heat of the sun is most felt.

Columbus still was patient,—a much-enduring man. He showed how strong his faith was in the words and promises of the Bible, and then told them that many wise men of old had thought the earth was round, that he had been where heat is most felt, with no harm, and could bear the same again.

Very few would listen at all when Columbus spoke, and those few were taken up with other duties; so the meeting broke up and nothing came of it.

The Court moved about from place to place, and while Columbus went with it, he was often in strange scenes of toil and danger.

A few friends gave him money when he was most in need of it; but most men, and even children, were taught to point at him as “out of his mind.”

The city of Malaga, whence we now get the best raisins, was long kept by the Moors, and fiercely did they fight for it. One of them tried to kill the

King and Queen in their tent, but mistook the way' and a lady of high rank but just escaped a death-stroke meant for the Queen.

From that time the lady was well cared for, and much loved by the Queen, and being a friend to Columbus and his cause, she did good service to both.

When the city of Malaga was taken, and the war nearly at an end, there came on a season of feasts and gay doings. Columbus had to press for the answer so long waited for, and put off from time to time. At last the learned men sent in their report and advice to the King, in these words:—

“The whole scheme was vain and wild, and it was not the duty of such great Princes to take part in anything of the kind.”

Meantime some men of rank and good sense had seen and got to know Columbus, and held him in such high regard for his true worth, that the King and Queen could not resolve to part with him.

Word was sent to Columbus that the cares and cost of war put it out of royal power to do aught at that time, but by and by he might hope to be heard again. This was a cold and cruel reply after five years' waiting, and Columbus turned his back on the Court to try what could be done by private men who had money to spare.

A noble duke was strongly tempted to give Columbus three small vessels, which were then at anchor in the port; but he was afraid to give offence, for the object in view was too great for any one below the rank of a Prince to attempt.

The duke said he would do his best with the Queen, if Columbus would but apply to her once more.

Columbus could not bear to do this, he had so long felt time and life wasting away in vain hopes and false promises. Just then, the King of France wrote to ask Columbus to come and visit Paris.

Sad in spirit, but with this intent, he went back to the convent where his child was left.

When the good Prior saw him again at the gate, in worn-out clothes, and his hope cast down, he was cut to the heart.

When he heard that Columbus was about to leave Spain, and the grand event they foresaw would be forever lost to his country, the old man's soul was quite moved. He called in many friends, and amongst them Martin Pinson, whose family were noted seafarers in the port of Palos.

Pinson saw the plans of Columbus, and felt so sure of success, that he was ready to join in person, and give all he had to bear part of the cost.

The Prior had known the Queen in former years, and there was no fear that she would refuse a reply to one of his holy calling. He would write to her, if Columbus could wait a little longer before he left Spain.

The letter was written, but how could it be sent? There was no post in those days, and the letter must be given into the Queen's own hand.

An old pilot said he would go, and at once set off, and made his way to Queen Isabella, who was truly the mother of all her people, rich and poor. She wrote a kind answer to the Prior, and bid him come to speak with her, at the same time giving hopes that Columbus

would also hear from her. At the end of fourteen days the old pilot came back with the royal letter, and spread joy through the convent.

No sooner had the warm-hearted Prior read this letter, than he put a saddle on his mule and set off that night for the Court. His way was through part of the land just taken from the Moors in the south of Spain, and he found the King and Queen living in a tent amidst the camp, near the city of Santa Fé.

The Prior soon made his coming known to the Queen; and, once in her presence, he spoke with a full heart for Columbus and his grand cause. Perhaps the Queen had never heard the whole matter laid before her in a style so clear and true. The Prior's zeal for the fame of his nation made him dwell on the glory for Spain and its Queen that would attend success.

Columbus was again sent for, and with kind thought for his poor plight, the Queen gave money to the Prior that he might buy a mule, and get some clothes for his friend.

The good man sent the money and a letter by a safe hand to the convent. Then Columbus took off his threadbare suit to wear one more fit for a court. He bought a mule, and started with new hopes to join the royal camp, which had moved to Granada.

When Columbus got there, he met a welcome in the tent of an old and steady friend. He saw the last King of the Moors come forth from his palace and give up the keys of that famed wonder of the world. What they knew of art is shown in an exact model of part of their palace, now to be seen within our Crystal Palace. It is called the Alhambra, and has more taste

and beauty than those we read of in the Fairy Tales of the East.

In the midst of a court and army given up to joy and gay doings, little notice was taken of Columbus ; yet he was in truth a greater man than any around him. The King and Queen had given their word to deal justly with Columbus when the war was at an end, and they had time to think of his claims.

They kept their word, and the treaty began.

Though Columbus was much worn with the trouble and grief he had gone through before he could find any one able and willing to help him to carry out his great idea, still he felt as sure as ever that he was right. He would not make any terms by which others should reap the glory and reward of all his efforts.

He desired to hold the title of Admiral, and to be Viceroy of the lands he might find, with a tenth part of all the riches to be got from them.

It was a great shock to the pride of those who were sent to treat with Columbus, to find this poor man expect to rise to a rank above them.

They judged of his mind by their own ; and said, it was love of gain that made him ask so much, for he would have no risk as he had nothing to lose. To this taunt Columbus made a calm reply, saying, that he would bear one-eighth of the cost, if he might have one-eighth of the profits. They did not know why he said this. The deep wish of his heart was to gain money enough to buy Jerusalem from the Turks, and thus set free the Holy City.

An ill report of Columbus and his terms was sent in to the Queen, and the treaty was at an end.

More than eighteen years had passed since Columbus first made his plans known to the world. Through the whole time he had to bear neglect, and scorn, and to feel heart-sick from hopes put off, but nothing could shake his resolve.

His hopes in Spain were over. He took leave of his friends, mounted his mule, and in February, 1492, went to Cordova, the port from which he could sail to France.



COLUMBUS.

CHAPTER III.

THE TRIALS OF "HOPE DEFERRED."

"It is always the darkest just before day."—*Old Proverb.*

THE few who put faith in Columbus were full of grief and dismay when they saw him depart. One of the nobles, who had leave to visit the Queen, made a last bold effort to prevent the shame and loss to his country. Strength of feeling gave force to his words, and he went on to say that if no land were found, there would be no disgrace to the crown, and but small loss in any case; as Columbus, by help of his friends, would bear one-eighth of the cost. Two small ships were all he asked for.

These reasons, and many more, were also urged by one of the ladies in service on the Queen, and she seemed at last to feel how grand and noble was the plan laid before her.

She said, she would run the risk. But the king was cold; he did not like the plan, but would not put a stop to it, as her wish was so strong. In fact, they had no money to spare. The war had been won at great cost to Spain and its Princes. Their purse was quite empty.

"Then," said Isabella, "I have given my word, and my jewels shall go to raise the money."

Terms were again drawn up and signed by the King and Queen; though, in fact, it was the Queen alone who had any part in the affair. A royal order was sent to the port of Palos to have the two small vessels there made ready for sea, and Columbus might add a third, at his own cost, if he thought fit.

The crews were to be paid four months' wages in advance. They were to sail just as Columbus might choose, and to obey him in all things.

The kind heart of Isabella caused her to send, as a last mark of favour to Columbus, an order for his son Diego to enter the service of Prince Juan, with means for his support: a favour rarely granted but to young men of high rank.

During the eighteen best years of his life, spent in waiting, Columbus did not faint or grow weary, though he knew his work was yet to be done.

Once more, Columbus went back to the gates of the convent. The Prior and Diego went with him to Palos, where new trials met him at every step. The royal order had been heard with dread, for evil tongues had sown seeds of distrust amidst the people, by fables and tales of every sort likely to do harm in the town, and still more amongst sailors, who are ever ready to take alarm. The vessels were refused, and no seamen would serve. A fresh order was sent from the Queen, which did no good. At length, Martin Pinson and his brother offered to fit out a ship, and to sail in it under the orders of Columbus. This made others take courage,

and by great efforts the ships were got ready for sea in a month from that time. Three small ships were all that Columbus had dared to ask or hope for. Two of them were no larger than those used close on our shores, with small cabins. Only one of the three ships had a deck. Everything was done badly, and with ill-will, by those who had to fit out the ships. The men, who had been paid beforehand, were tempted away, or kept back by their friends.

But in spite of all these troubles, Columbus at last hoisted his flag on board the larger ship; it was called the "Santa Maria."

The second was called the "Pinta," under Martin Pinson, with his brother Francis for a pilot. The third, little better than a boat, was in charge of Vincent Pinson, and its name was "Nina." They took out with them a royal inspector, a doctor, a surgeon, some servants, and 90 seamen, making in all 120 men.

When all were on board, and the ships ready to sail, Columbus gave his son to the care of the convent friends, whom he could so well trust, and bade him farewell. He then joined with the Prior in the most touching rite of our Christian faith, which caused others to do the same, and thus prepared, they sailed out of port. A deep gloom spread over the port of Palos, where so many had parted with friends whom they thought would never return.

The rough seamen had taken leave with tears, for their hearts were cast down by the fears and forebodings of those left behind them, and thus had all parted, as men who were never to meet again.

"So loth we part from all we love,
From all the links that bind us;
So turn our hearts, where'er we rove,
To those we've left behind us."



CARAVELS OF COLUMBUS, AFTER AN ENGRAVING OF THE DATE 1583.

CHAPTER IV.

THE OUTWARD BOUND.

“A blessing on the outward bound,
Wherever they may go,
From hills and dales their fathers owned,
Or cottage poor and low.
'Tis no slight thing to part from home,
Whate'er that home may be,
To trust a doubtful future on
The wild and stormy sea.”

I T was at break of day, on the 3rd of August, 1492, that Columbus set sail for the Canary Isles, whence he meant to sail on due west. Day by day he wrote down what came to pass; and this book, in his handwriting, is still to be seen in the city of Madrid. He also made a map, as a guide to sail by, but it is now lost.

The joy and hope that Columbus might now have felt, were kept in check by want of trust in his men. So long as they knew the way, and were within a few days' reach of land, it was to be feared they would rebel, and try to get back again. Signs of this were soon made known. On the third day, the “Pinta” was in distress—her rudder hung loose. Columbus

felt sure this had been done by stealth, to force her return, and was but a foretaste of troubles to come. The wind blew so hard at the time that he could give no aid without risk to his own ship.

Martin Pinson was an able sailor, and made the rudder fast with cords; but these could not last, and their hope was to make them hold out so far as the Canary Isles, which came in sight on the ninth day. Three weeks were spent on these islands, in the vain hope to find a better ship, but at last the frail ones were set to rights, and they put to sea again.

As they sailed on, the high peak of a steep rock was seen far off, which showed smoke and flame from its top. The crews took alarm at this, as a bad omen. Columbus was at great pains to show them the causes of such fires, and then spoke of Etna, in Sicily, so well known to all ships in the seas near home.

Early on the 9th of September, Columbus left the last point of known land; but a dead calm kept the ships for three whole days within reach of it. When a fresh breeze sprung up he thought all was safe, and the voyage in truth begun; but the sailors shed tears and made loud cries, from fear that all those they loved best were lost to them for ever. Their leader tried to soothe and fill their minds with hopes of new scenes, and wonders, and riches in the seas before them.

From this time, Columbus took care to keep two books, one for himself, and one for the crew, to see and judge of the state of the ships, and the way they made. On the 11th of September they fell in with part of a mast, which, from its size, must have been on a large

ship, and they saw that it had lain very long in the water. The crew looked on this with fear, as sign of shipwreck. On the 13th of September there was a more just cause for alarm. The needle of the compass began to waver, and without this guide what was to become of them on the wide ocean? Columbus did his best to show cause for it, but to this day we know no more than the fact, that so it is, and no man can tell why. On the 14th of September a heron and one other bird flew over the ships, and at night, for the first time, they saw a fiery glow in the sky, which made them still more timid and fearful, though it is now a well-known wonder in the hot climes of the South Seas.

After awhile, large patches of herbs and weeds were seen to float on the top of the sea. On one of these patches was a live crab, which was picked up, and Columbus took care of it. On the 18th they had a steady breeze from the east, and the crews were in high spirits. Each ship tried to be foremost to get the first sight of land. At times there was a misty cloud in the north, such as often hangs over land at sunset. It took many shapes, which made the men wish to steer that way. Columbus knew better, and would not let them change the fixed course of the ships. Once they saw two snow-white pelicans, which are heavy birds, not able to fly very far from land.

Some small birds also came to cheer them by day with songs, and flew away at night; but still no land could be seen, and the men gave way to idle fears and fancies. On the 25th of September a heavy swell of the sea came on, with no wind. We now know that

this is very often the case in the broad ocean, owing to some *past* storm, or a far-distant one, that takes effect on the waves.

Columbus tried to make his men feel the holy trust that filled his own soul, as Moses did when he led the children of Israel out of Egypt.

When this alarm was over, the trials of Columbus were by no means less than before. Though each day, as they sailed on, must bring them nearer to land, yet each day the fears and conduct of the crew became worse. The signs so full of hope to the mind of Columbus did but add to the fears of the men.

Some of them laid a plot to throw their leader into the sea, and turn back. Columbus knew of all this bad feeling, but still bore all in patience, and spoke wisely and well to each man in turn. On the 25th of September the wind was due east, and took them onwards. Once the cry of "Land!" was heard, but the daylight put an end to this fresh dream of hope. They still went on. Dolphins played around the ships, and flying-fish fell upon the decks. These new sights kept the sailors amused. On the 7th of October, some of the admiral's crew thought they saw land in the west, but before the close of day the signs were lost in the air. They had now sailed 750 leagues, more than 2000 miles, from any known land. Flights of small birds came about the ships; a heron, a pelican, and a duck were seen; and so they went on, till one night, when the sun went down on a shoreless sea, the crew rose against Columbus, to force his return. He was firm as ever, but spoke gently, and prayed them to trust that all would yet be well. It was hard work to make them

submit and obey, and the state of things for Columbus was bad indeed.

Next day brought some relief; for the signs of land were more and more sure. They saw fresh weeds, such as only grow in rivers, and a kind of fish only found about rocks. The branch of a tree with berries on it floated past, and they picked up a piece of cane; also a board and stick, with strange things cut on them. All gloom and ill-will now cleared away. Each man hoped to be the first to see the new land, and thus to win the large reward in money which was then to be given him. The breeze had been fresh all day, and they sailed very fast. At sunset their course was due west. Every one was on the alert. No man on board the three ships went to sleep that night. When it grew dark, Columbus took his place on the top of the cabin. He was glad to be alone just on the eve of the long-looked-for event. His eye was keen, and now on the strain, through the deep, still shades of night. All at once, about ten o'clock, he thought he saw a light far off. Lest hope should mislead him, he called up a man to his side. Yes!—there again!—it surely was a light. They called the mate. Yes; he, too, was sure of the same; and then it was gone, and soon they all saw it again. It might be a torch in the bark of some fishermen, rising and sinking with the waves, or a light in the hand of a man on shore, moving here and there. Thus Columbus **KNEW** that land was there, with men upon it. What words can tell the joy of his brave and noble soul!

In two hours after this, a gun was fired from the "Pinta," the glad signal for land. It was now clearly

seen. They took in sail, and waited for the full light of day.

The thoughts and feelings of Columbus, as the day dawned, must have been almost too strong to bear. Through the power of faith and trust, he had overcome every trial and trouble. With three such poor, mean, small ships, and most unworthy crews, he had sailed across the ocean, and a new world lay open before him. His life's labour would for ever tell on ages yet to come, so long as the world might endure.

“The greatest works of mind or hand have been
Done unto God ; so may it ever be.”

CHAPTER V.

FIRST LANDING OF COLUMBUS IN THE NEW WORLD.

“ The self-same tongue, that but few hours ago
Had counsell'd straight return, and sought to show
The folly of his scheme, their certain woe,—
Vain upstarts, who had jeer'd, aye, menaced him,
And faint hearts, with desponding looks and dim,
All mixed their rash breath with his soul's deep hymn.”

ON Friday, the 12th of October, a fair island, full of fine trees, lay in view of the three ships. Men were seen coming from every side to the shore, where they stood to gaze at a sight so new to them—the sight of ships with sails. The men wore no clothes, for the air was so warm they had no need of clothing such as we wear. Columbus gave the sign for the ships to cast anchor, and having put on a scarlet robe, he got into his own boat to row to the shore. He was the first to set foot on the new land, and then knelt down to kiss the earth which he had thus lived to see. With tears of joy he spoke aloud from the fulness of his heart, and the sailors heard his prayer and thanksgiving. Those who had so lately laid plots against the life of their leader were now loud in his praises. Some asked pardon for their ill deeds, and said they

would obey him in all things from that time. The natives fled in fear to the woods when they saw the boats come to shore, but after awhile they drew near again to look on the strange guests. The bodies of the wild men were painted, their hair was straight, and cut short above the ears, with some few locks left long to fall upon the shoulders. "They were not tall, but well made; their faces pleasant, and they had fine eyes."

Columbus thought he had landed on the West Coast of India, which made him call the natives Indians, by which name we know them still. They were gentle and kind and had no weapons for fighting. A lance of wood, with the bone of a fish to point it, was all they had to kill any wild bird or beast.

No iron was seen amongst them. When a drawn sword was shown them they took hold of it by the edge, not knowing the sharp cut it would give.

Some small brass bells, glass beads, and gay caps, were gifts of great price to the Indians. Columbus let his men stay on shore till sunset, to rest after their sea-toils.

Next day the Indians had lost all fear, and many of them swam off to the ships. Others rowed in light barks, or *canoes*, their word to mean a boat made out of a tree. Some of the canoes held one man, others were large enough for forty or fifty.

The natives now sought for gifts from the white men, not for the sake of what they could get, but because they thought the guests had come down from the skies to do them good. In return, the natives gave all they had to offer, which were tame parrots, cotton-

yarn, and a sort of cake, like bread, made from the root of a tree.

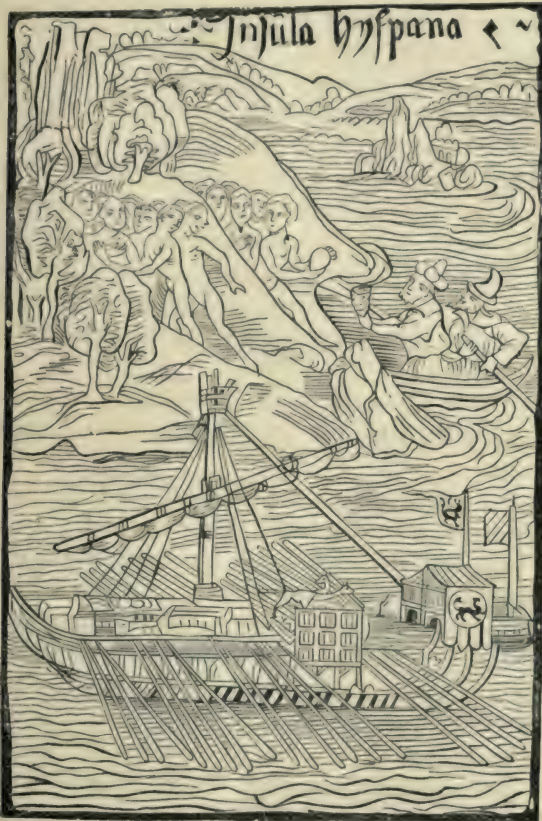
The sailors soon saw some small things made of gold, and tried to get them, but Columbus would not let this be done. By signs he tried to ask where the gold came from, and they pointed to the south. In the same way he heard of land to the north.

In a few days the Admiral put all his boats in order for sailing along the coast. Everywhere the natives tried to show he was welcome, for they all thought the white man had come down from the skies. Columbus made all the natives love him, and they freely brought their simple gifts of cotton-yarn and fruits. Columbus wrote down at night all that had passed in the day, and these were his words about the new land: "I know not where first to go, nor are my eyes ever weary of the lovely scene; it seems as if one could live for ever in this pure, sweet air."

This island on which Columbus first set foot was one of those we now call the Bahamas. When he sailed on in the ships, he found one much larger, which the people called Cuba; and here, for the first time, he saw the tiny bird, which in their native word was called "Bird of the Sun-beam:" we know it as the Humming-Bird: also a kind of stork was seen, with scarlet feathers—so bright, that a flock of them, as they stood far off to feed, were taken for a troop of soldiers.

Columbus sent on shore two men, whom he could trust, to learn what they could of the new-found land. They took with them beads and other gifts. Meantime he went on by sea from isle to isle, and many new things were seen and taken on board, in exchange for bells and

beads. At one place a small root was put into the hand of Columbus, who took care of it. This humble gift



DISCOVERY OF THE ISLE OF SPAIN (ST. DOMINGO).

Facsimile of an engraving reputed to be by Columbus: date, 1493.

has proved of more use to man than all the gold and

spices of the East. It was the potato. At length the Admiral made signs to Martin Pinson, on board the "Pinta," to turn back, but he was not obeyed. Martin had got some wild idea of a land full of gold, and he went off to try to get the first share of it.

Columbus did not know this, and feared that Martin was gone back to Spain, that he might take the first news of all that they had seen and done.

Columbus sailed on for a time, hoping the "Pinta" might join him, and found another large island, which the natives called Hayti, or High-lands. Many mistakes were made while trying to find out the words of the natives, and the names they gave are now proved to be best, for they mean something by which each place may be known again.

At Hayti the natives all thought the new-comers were more than mortal, and had dropped down from the skies.

On the 24th of December the wind was from the land, but so light as hardly to fill the sails, and Columbus, who had kept watch on deck for many hours by day and night, felt great need of rest. He gave the helm in charge to the best seaman on board, but no sooner was the Admiral out of sight than the trust was abused, and the man left it to a ship-boy, who was half asleep. The heedless lad took no note of the breaking waves, though the roar of their waters over the rocks beneath gave loud warning of danger. He felt the rudder strike, and cried out for help, but it was too late to save the ship. The sea was very calm, or the whole crew would have lost their lives.

When the Indians saw this sad cause for distress,

their chief sent all his tribe to give help, and they did it so well that much was saved and brought on shore.

The chief then set a guard over all that was stored up, and no one tried to touch what must have been to their eyes most rare and tempting things.

On the 26th of December a chief went on board the "Nina" to visit Columbus, and was so full of pity for the loss of his best ship, that he shed tears while speaking words of comfort.

The chief urged Columbus to go on shore, and this was with the kind intent to amuse him, by their dances and games.

When these were over, Columbus sent to the ship for a bow and arrow, and the man who could shoot best at a mark. After this show of skill he told his men to fire off a small cannon. When the sound was heard, the Indians fell to the ground, as if struck by a thunder-bolt. Their fear was great; but Columbus made signs that this cannon would only be used in time of war, and then they felt still more sure that such guests had come down from the skies to do them good.

The chief did his best to get plenty of food for Columbus and his men. The sailors were so well off that some of them wished to stay behind, instead of crowding into one small ship, which was all they had to carry them back to Spain. They begged of Columbus to let them stay till he could return to fetch them. From the wreck of the ship they could build a fort, and enough could be spared from the stores to supply their wants for a time. The natives were ready to give them all the help they could; for, alas! they did not foresee

the grief and trouble that would come upon them from such acts of good-will and kindness.

When the fort was built, Columbus was in haste to go away, for Martin Pinson had not been heard of, and it was but too likely that he would strive to be the first to reach home, and might then rob his friend the Admiral of the glory so justly his due.

Columbus was patient under this trial, for he was anxious that at any rate one of the crazy ships should cross the great ocean in safety, lest the news of all he had seen and done might be for ever lost to the world. The Indian chief was full of love and care for Columbus, and brought farewell gifts of gold and other things that he had seen him look at with pleasure.

On the 2nd of January, 1493, Columbus went on shore to bid farewell to the chief, and all his Indian friends. He gave a parting feast at the fort they had helped to build, and then made his men go through mock fights, to show the force of their fire-arms. At one time the Indians would have fled to the woods from fear, but now they thought, as before, that all these wonders were for their safety and defence, when the war chiefs came from other islands to attack them.

Next day the "Nina" was to sail. The parting was felt on all sides, and most by those who had begged to stay behind; but still they did not change their minds, and so were left, with many a charge from Columbus to behave like Christian men.

On the 6th, Columbus set sail with a land breeze; and when beyond the last point of land, a sailor at the mast-head cried out that he saw the "Pinta," which soon came near with all her sails set.

Martin Pinson made many excuses, but Columbus was not deceived; it was plain that he must have been in search of gold for himself. He could no longer put trust in Martin or his brother, for at any time they might leave him again. The best and only plan now was, to return with both ships to Spain. On the way they found a new island, with natives more bold and warlike than those first met with. Columbus longed to search for new islands and lands unknown, but as his ships were unfit, and his men far from willing, he felt it wiser to wait, hoping it might yet be granted him to complete what he had thus begun.

Columbus always took care to note every sign by which the exact course of the ships might be known, and he was the only one on board who could at any time say on what spot of the wide ocean their frail bark was set.

The wind was much against them, and on the 12th of February a storm began to rise. They were far out at sea, in two small ships with no decks. The storm soon burst upon them in all its fury. They had no shelter, and were forced to lie all night with nothing but the bare masts overhead. This gale over, they made a little sail, but the wind soon rose again from the south, and it seemed as if the strong waves would dash the ships to pieces.

The ships lost sight of each other in the darkness of night. As the storm grew more wild and fearful, the "Nina" was tossed about by the fury of the waves. The "Pinta" could nowhere be seen, and Columbus had to fear the loss of it. His own ship was so frail, it could hardly bear the rough sea. Still his faith was

strong in the mercy of God to save him, and he did all that he could to deserve it.

The thought came into his mind, that if he and his ships should perish the tale of what he had done might yet reach the shores of the Old World. He wrote a letter to the Queen, with a short account of all he had seen and done. A seal was put upon this, and on the outside of it a promise was written, that a rich reward would be given to any one who found the packet and took it to the Queen of Spain. The letter was then put into a cloth, made water-tight with wax, and this was fixed in the midst of a cake of wax; the whole was put into a cask and thrown into the sea, in the hope it might float on to the east, like the logs of wood they had seen. Columbus did the same to put into a second cask, which he set on the poop of the ship, so that in case it went down in a storm, the cask might float off, and some day be picked up and taken care of.

The same has been done by many a captain in later days, when the hour of danger made a crew think of friends at home. When all this was done the mind of Columbus was more at rest.

At sun-down there was a streak of clear sky in the west, but the sea ran so high, little way could be made.

On the 15th, at day-break, the cry of "Land!" was heard from a sailor on the topmast. The joy of the toil-worn crew was little less than they had felt when they first saw the New World.

The land now in sight was one of the Azores, or Western Isles. It was some days before the ship could cast anchor. Columbus was ill, and yet could take no

rest or food, for he dared not again trust the watch on deck to any hand but his own.

His bodily pain was often great, and still he bore cold and wet, from the dashing waves that broke over the ship. When he did get sleep, it was some relief to his worn-out body, but not any rest for the cares on his mind. So great were the perils of the way home, that had half of them beset his outward course, the sailors always timid and often unruly, would have put him to death, so to end all his hopes of finding a new world.

A boat was sent to land, and it proved that Columbus was right; they had come to St. Mary's Isle, one of the Azores, and under the rule of the King of Portugal. When the people on shore saw so frail a bark at anchor, they could hardly believe it had borne the heavy gales and storms which had raged around their island for many days; and when they heard that this poor ship had come from the far west, and brought news of land beyond the ocean, they were full of wonder.

At night, these good men of the island took fowls and bread, and other things to refresh those on board.

Next day Columbus spoke to his crew of a vow they had made while in danger, to go to church and offer thanks at the first port where they might land. Part of the crew went on shore to keep this vow, and met cruel usage after all they had gone through. The seamen had no sooner got to the church than they were seized and taken to prison. Night came on, and Columbus was anxious, for no men came back. He weighed anchor, and sailed round the island, to try to see what was going on; and kept his men on guard for fear of danger. A boat came near them, and then they

learnt the truth. Columbus was angry, and spoke as he felt at such a cruel act.

After much trouble and delay the men were set free, and then Columbus heard that the King of Portugal had sent strict orders to have himself seized, if he could be met with at any port of his kingdom.

“A noble soul is like a ship at sea,
That rides at anchor when the ocean's calm,
But when it rages, and the wind blows high,
She cuts her way with skill and majesty.”

CHAPTER VI.

ARRIVAL IN PORTUGAL, AND VISIT TO THE COURT—1492.

“ See, at length the clouds are breaking,
 Tempests have not pass'd in vain ;
And the soul, revived, awaking,
 Rears its fruits and flowers again.”

Hymns from the Land of Luther—“ Discipline.”

COLUMBUS was obliged to stay two days longer at St. Mary's Isle, to take in wood and water. He set sail again on the 24th of February, and had fair winds till the 27th, when a heavy gale came on, which was a hard trial ; driving him back, as it were, from the very door-way of home. On the 2nd of March the ship was struck by a fresh gale of wind, that rent all her sails, and blew so hard she was forced to scud before it with bare masts, while the rain beat down upon the toil-worn seamen. In the first watch of this fearful night a sailor gave the cry of “ Land ! ” which was a new cause for fear, instead of joy ; for they did not know what shore they were near, or how to escape its rocks and shoals. At daybreak, on the 4th of March, they found the ship was driven near to the mouth of the Tagus, and that the people on land had seen their distress. The oldest sailor had never known a worse storm.

Columbus lost no time in sending off a message to the King and Queen of Spain, and asked leave to take the ship to Lisbon.

This was not refused, though he had been so ill-used at the Azores. Next day, the captain of a man-of-war went on board the ship of Columbus, and when he heard all that had been seen and done with such poor means, he showed high respect for the noble man who had bravely won success through so much toil and danger. For many days the "Nina" was full of visitors, some of high rank, and all alike eager to hear of, and see, the wonders from the New World.

On the 8th of March, King John sent a letter to invite Columbus to court. He did not wish to go, but thought it best to do so. He was treated with due honour, and the King sat for a long time, to hear all he had to tell. It was plain how much regret he felt, when too late, for all that had been lost to the crown of Portugal.

King John was mean, as at first, and resolved in secret to send out some ships while Columbus had to wait upon the Princes in Spain.

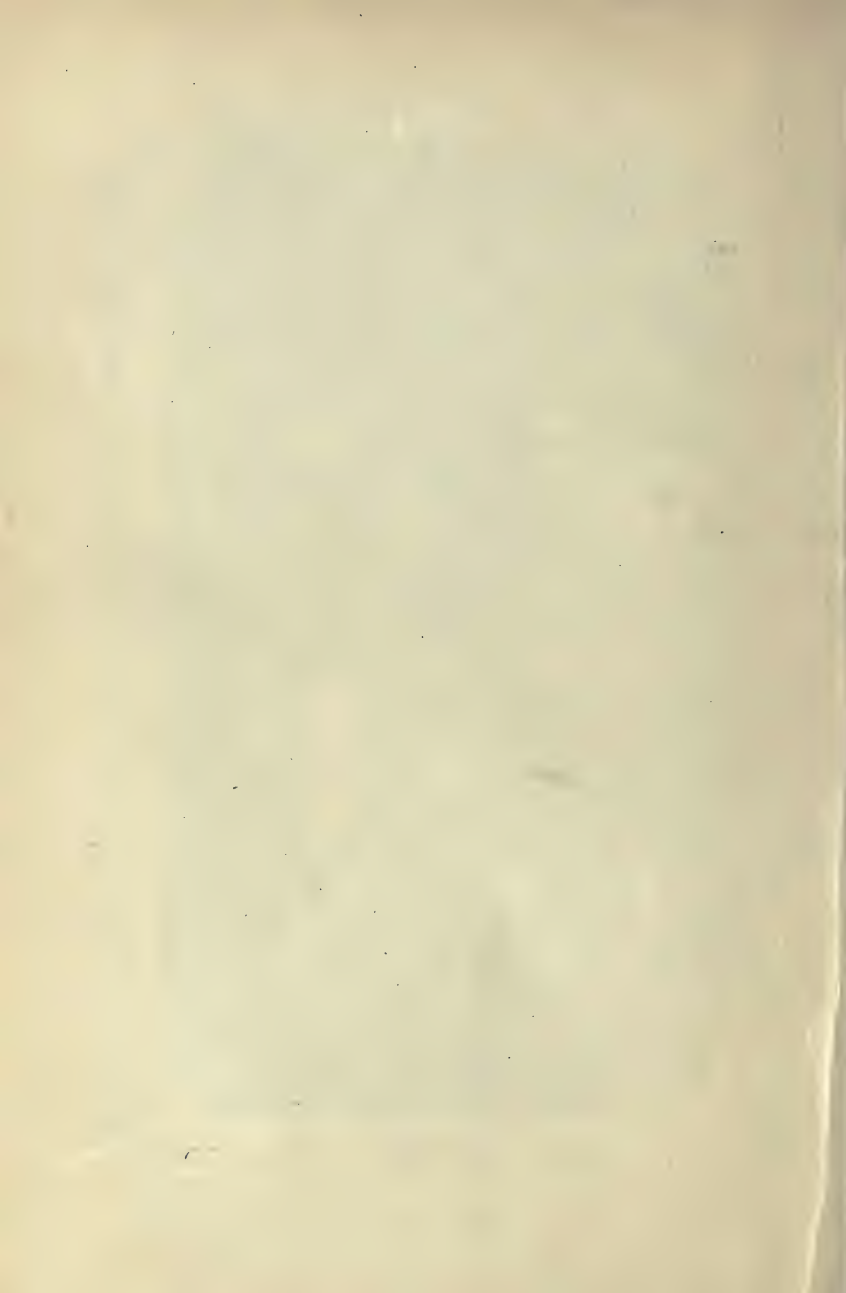
The return of Columbus to the little port of Palos was a grand event to every one, for there were many who hoped to meet a brother or a friend.

The bells were rung, and shops were shut, to make a holiday. The whole town turned out to hurry towards the shore. When Columbus set foot on land the people stood round in a throng, to see and welcome him; but he pressed on, to go and offer up thanks in church.

Shouts of joy were heard in the streets, and every



LISBON IN THE 16TH CENTURY, AFTER A CONTEMPORARY ENGRAVING.



voice was loud in his praise—in praise of a man once so ill-thought of; and who had been so poor as to crave bread and water for his weary child at the gate of a convent.

Columbus again sent word to the King and Queen, and waited for their orders. While the bells still rang out their glad peals of welcome from each church tower, the “Pinta,” with its captain, Martin Pinson, sailed into port. Martin did not know what had become of Columbus, after the storm which had parted them, and he hoped to have been the first to reach Spain.

When he saw the Admiral’s flag, and heard the bells, he was conscience-struck.

He thought of the many wrongs of which Columbus might justly complain, and was afraid to meet him. It is conscience that makes cowards of us all. Martin got into his boat and went home—sad at heart, when all else were so glad: he had taken the fancy that every hand would point at him with scorn. In a few days he died—of illness brought on by the struggles of his mind, from envy and remorse. This sad story is one of the many proofs that much good service is of little value when any known duty is left undone. The Christian must ever strive to be heart-whole, and act truly in all things.

CHAPTER VII.

A ROYAL WELCOME.

“ Confirm his welcome with some special favour,
His worth is warrant for his welcome hither.”

SHAKESPEARE.

THE letter which Columbus wrote to the King and Queen spread joy through the court. He was asked to come to them at once, and lost no time in doing so. He took with him the six Indians, and everything he had brought from their far-off land. About the middle of April, in a fine season, Columbus and his train reached the city of Barcelona. The Indians were led on first, and great care was taken to show off the gold which they brought; but every eye was turned on Columbus himself, whose noble bearing was very striking. The King and Queen sat in state, with Prince Juan, all eager to see the man who had done so much to serve them.

When at length Columbus went into the hall, amidst a gay and noble throng, his manly figure, his grey hairs, and quiet dignity, showed him to be above them all. A calm smile was on his lips, as he saw and felt all that was done to mark the feeling of a nation.

When he drew near the throne, King, Queen, and Prince rose to meet him, as it was the custom to meet those only of high rank. They desired him to sit down; which no subject had ever done before in that proud court. At the request of the Queen, Columbus gave an account of the chief events as they befell him, and showed all the curious things he had brought from the New World. When this was ended, the choir of the royal chapel chanted an anthem, to raise the feelings and thoughts of all present to the Giver of all good, and then they joined in a public act of prayer and praise. Before he left the city a grand feast was made, and then it was the well-known story about an egg took place. Some of those invited, who were noble in name and very grand, did not like this sailor to be so much thought of, and envy was in their hearts at the sight of him. They said he had only been more rash than others, and had found out the new land just by chance or good luck.

Columbus heard them, and was patient. It was of no use to say that such words were wrong and false. He took an egg from the dish and asked if any one could make it stand firm on an end. Each guest took it in hand, but no one could set it up. The egg would roll down in spite of all their care. "Give it to me," said Columbus. He took it, and broke in the shell at one end. It stood at once. They all cried out, "Why, I could have done that!" "Yes; if the thought had struck you, and brought forth a deed. You might also have found out a New World, if the thought had struck you, and been kept in mind till *it was done.*"

In the midst of the shouts of the people and the joy

of the court, Columbus kept in mind the cause on which his heart had been set from the first hour he resolved to try to find a New World. This was, his hope to gain means to free the Holy Land from the power of the Turks. All was sunshine at court; the man most in favour was he who had often before been pointed at with scorn. Some of his letters that are still to be seen, speak only of those who were his first friends, the Prior of the convent and the good Bishop of Seville. He knew how true it is, "old friends are best," and that there is nothing so short-lived as public fame.

At this time, the King of Spain was not only ready and willing, but in haste, to send out a fleet of ships under the orders of Columbus.

In those days it was thought right to ask leave of the Pope before any great work was begun, and he made a grant to the crown of Spain of all lands that might be found far to the west, beyond the Azores or Western Islands. The idea of such a grant might be all fair to those who owned the right of the Pope to make it, but was quite unjust to the chiefs and people in the far west, whose land ought not to have been thus given away without their own leave or good-will.

In a short time, seventeen ships, most of them large ones, were got ready for sea in the port of Cadiz. A strong desire to see the New World, and gain some of its gold, had made men of all ranks and classes eager to embark. Columbus could not take half the young men, both rich and poor, who wanted to go, but chose about 1,500 of them. He took on board some horses, asses, and cows, with stores of food, tools, and all things

needful to build a town ; he also took the seeds of many fruit-trees, to try them in the new land.

Before sunrise, on the 25th of September, 1493, the port of Cadiz was white with sails. On its quay stood a throng of people, and amongst them the tall form and noble head of Columbus was seen, and near him his son Diego, proud of his father's fame.

Every eye was turned upon them, and every tongue was loud in praise of him whose great deeds were spoken of in every city throughout Europe.

Columbus went on board the flag-ship, and the fleet set sail. At the Canary Islands he stayed three days to take in water, wood, and pigs. These pigs are said to have given rise to the great stock of them now in America.

They had a fair wind, and in thirty-eight days came in sight of a new island.

Columbus called it Dominica, the word in Spain for Sunday, because it was first seen on that day. As the ships moved gently on, many more islands rose in sight, like gems on the ocean, full of large trees, while flocks of parrots and other gay birds were on the wing from one isle to another.

Columbus did not stop anywhere, for his first object was to visit the fort he had built for those who were to wait his return. They were soon near the shore, but no sign of life or welcome was to be seen. Columbus spent a sleepless night, and at dawn of day got into a boat to row to land. He soon found there was but too much cause for alarm. Nothing was left of the fort, and no traces of men, except some torn pieces of clothes, broken swords, and a few old pots and pans. Some

way off they found the dead bodies of eleven white men, which bore marks of death by wounds. While they stood by, to mourn the sad fate of their friends, an Indian drew near, and told by signs what had come to pass.

No sooner had Columbus gone from the island than the men he had left were guilty of many crimes, and used the Indians very badly, besides taking from them everything made of gold. At last they could bear it no longer. The fort was set on fire in the dead of night, and those who tried to escape from it were slain. Some few rushed into a boat, which was upset, and they were all drowned in the sea.

The chief, who had loved Columbus, was then ill of a wound which he got while trying, for his sake, to defend the fort and its worthless men. He was still willing to let the new-comers dwell on his land, if they would keep the peace.

Columbus chose a new spot, near the banks of a river, and every hand was set to work to build the first town in the New World, which was called Isabella, in honour of the Queen.

Though the town was to be a place of safety for every one, and the need for such a refuge very certain, it would never have been built but for the strong will and great patience of Columbus. His people had no mind to work; they wanted to get rich at once, by seeking for gold, which they thought could be got without any trouble. Instead of this, they were made to toil in the heat of a burning sun, which made them still more lazy and angry. Some of the worst tried to put an end to the life of their leader. The plot was found out, and

they were seized and sent back to Spain, to take their trials for the crime. At the same time, Columbus asked the King to send him more troops, and fresh stores of food.

Meanwhile he did all that he could to regain the goodwill of the natives, and make them think better of the white men. He made the soldiers march with their flags, and a band of music, while those on horseback went through their exercises. The Indians had never before seen a horse, and at first they took horse and rider to be one strange beast; which added to their fears of the white men.

They fled to the woods; and so simple was their own way of life that they felt safe inside a poor hut, when the door-place was closed by a slight bolt of wood, or a pile of rushes.

At length Columbus let some of his men go in search of gold. Enough was found in the brooks and streams to show that more might be hidden in the hills beyond; but the Indians had never dug for it, having little use for metal. It was long before Columbus could leave the town to learn more of the new land he had found, for fresh troubles arose. It was not easy for the Indians to find food for so many people, and the stores which had been brought from Spain soon came to an end.

At last, all was peace and good order in the town, and Columbus thought he might safely leave for a short time; and he felt more sure about this, because he left his brother Diego to rule in his place.

With a fair breeze, Columbus sailed along the coast of the Island, which we now know by its Indian name of Cuba. The sight of ships with sails spread

wonder all along the shore. Sweet scents were borne on the air, and the sound of rude music, which made the heart of Columbus feel glad once more.

Crowds of natives then dwelt near the shore, their huts could be seen quite down to the water's edge.

Where are they now?

The race is gone for ever, and their songs will no more be heard. All is silent when a ship now sails along the once happy land. The cities of the white men, few and far between, are all that can be found. Columbus still sailed on; and at last saw birds in such great flocks as to hide the sun's light, and once a cloud of gay butterflies passed over his ship. They also saw many large sea-tortoises and turtles. These were caught by the bait of a small fish, about the size of a herring, with a long line tied to its tail. The fish was thrown into the sea, and by means of a sucker on its head, soon fixed itself on the neck of a turtle, and held so tight that it could be drawn out with its prey, though the turtle might be large and of great weight.

This life of peace and calm seas was not to last long. A storm arose just when the ships were in a sea full of rocks and shoals.

It was the Admiral who kept watch, when the tired sailors fell asleep, amidst the roar of the waves, in the dark hours of night. But it could not be done for ever. His health gave way—the noble spirit was forced to yield, and, in alarm for his life, the crew made all haste back to the town of Isabella.

There they found fresh ships from Spain, which had been sent out under charge of Bartholomew, a brother whom Columbus had not met for thirteen years. This

loving face was a true cordial for the body and mind of the worn-out Admiral.

All things had gone wrong in his absence; for the officers and men would obey no law but that of their own evil wills. They had been cruel to the Indians, who were now made to fear and detest the very sight of those whom they had once looked up to as come down from the skies to bless all on earth.

The Indians had not gold enough to please so many strangers, nor food enough to feed them. With dismay, they often saw one white man eat at a meal what would have kept three Indians for four days.

The brothers of Columbus were not liked by the people he had brought with him from Spain, and Diego had not been able to put a stop to their cruel conduct towards the Indians.

Small bells were the gifts most prized by the Indians; they hung them round their necks and waists, that they might hear the clear sound when they danced.

The large bell of the church in Isabella was the wonder of the island. When its sound was heard in the depths of the forest, and the white men were seen to go homewards at its call, the toll was taken for words from the skies, which white men must obey.

This bell was made the lure to get a strong chief into the power of the white men. An officer, who had made friends with the chief, told him that he should have the bell if he would come to the town of Isabella and fetch it. He could not resist the bribe, and came. Then he was shown how to mount a horse on which the officer sat, and no sooner was he seated than his false friend carried him off from the very midst of his tribe. They were very angry, and war was the end of it.

As soon as Columbus could rise from his bed of sickness, he was obliged to lead forth his troops from the town of Isabella in battle array. Their way was through a narrow pass amidst the hills; and the Admiral looked down with grief upon this land, so full of beauty, about to be spoiled by the bad spirit of man. They saw the smoke of many an Indian fire rising here and there from amongst the trees, and in each place a horde of foes were waiting to burst upon those who had done them so much wrong.

A vast army of dark men soon stood before the small band of white men; but their fire-arms, the shock of their horses as they dashed onwards, and the fierce yells of a pack of bloodhounds which the white men had with them, soon showed who would be masters of the field on that first day of bloodshed and horror.

The Indians soon fled to the top of the rocks, but many were killed, or made captive, and their army was quite broken up.

Columbus was not without mercy; but he knew too well that nothing but gold would please the court of Spain: so he forced the Indians to find it; and also to bring him cotton-yarn, and food, from very dread lest the horses and dogs should be again let loose upon them.

The wretched natives were in despair. They were not used to toil. Their free and happy life in the forest was at an end. No more could they lie under the tall palm-trees at noon, or enjoy dance and song in the cool evening hours.

They were now made to grope day by day along the river-sides to pick up grains of gold, or labour in the field to raise food for hard task-masters.

With weary limbs they lay down at night, and with more weary spirits they rose again, to go through the same dull round of task-work.

The chief who had first known and loved Columbus, could not bear to see the woes which his own kind welcome to strangers had brought upon the island. He was unfit for scenes of war and stern rule of the white men. He also had to bear the sad looks of blame from his own tribe, which soon caused his death—of a broken heart. While these troubles went on in the west, evil tongues were busy at the court of Spain. Fault was found with all that Columbus had done, and more ships were sent out, with officers on board, all of one mind, to do what they could for the ruin of Columbus and his brothers. The temper of the Admiral had been well trained to patience, and he had met those who had come from the King and Queen with respect, and with a grave but mild manner.

He soon found out their object, and the harm which envy was causing him at home, and he got ready at once to go back to Spain.

Just then a storm arose, which the Indians called "Furicane," as we now say, hurricane. The hour of midday was dark as night, except when flashes of lightning broke forth for an instant. Great trees in the forest fell before the blast, and branches of trees, and even pieces of rock, were borne along by the fury of the wind.

The ships were whirled round as they lay at anchor. Many went down with all on board—the rest were driven about, and dashed against each other, and at last tossed as wrecks upon the shore. This tempest

lasted for three hours. Never had one so fearful been known upon that island, and the poor natives thought it was sent to end the strength and crimes of the cruel white men.

The "Nina" was the only ship that could be made fit for sea again, and one other was built from the wrecks that strewed the shore. While thus obliged to wait, Columbus heard of rich mines of gold, and this was great news to carry back to Spain.

Bartholomew was left to rule in the place of the Admiral, who set sail on the 11th of March, 1496, taking with him about 225 idle and worthless persons whom he dared not leave; though he knew they would but speak evil of him, and of the once fair land in the west, when they reached home.

Columbus thought it would save time to sail due east; but this was a mistake, for he had to toil against the winds and calms which we now know how to avoid by going north, on the return from America. When they had been four months at sea there was no food left on board the ships—death, from famine, was before them all. It needed all the power of Columbus to save the lives of a few Indians whom he had taken on board his own ship. He said they had as good a right to live as the rest, and no Christian should touch them. He bid the crew be patient, and they would see land in a few hours. At night he gave orders to take in sail, lest they should run on any coast in the dark. Loud murmurs arose, for they said it was better to be cast on shore than to starve at sea. The next day, to the joy of all, they came in sight of the very land which Columbus had told them to look for.

On the 11th of June they cast anchor in the Bay of Cadiz.

"The more by thought thou leav'st the crowd behind,
Draw near by deeper love to all thy kind;
So shall thy heart in lowly peace be still,
And earthly wisdom serve a heavenly will."—TRENCH

CHAPTER VIII.

THE THIRD VOYAGE.

“That would be ten days’ wonder at the least.
That’s a day longer than the wonder lasts.”

SHAKESPEARE.

IN three short years the Old World had got used to the thought of a new one, and its day of wonder was over.

No church bells rang out a glad peal when a feeble train of sickly men, with a worn-out crew, crept forth out of two small ships, after a voyage of many months, to tell tales of woe.

The zeal of men at home grew very faint. Columbus did not care for any slight shown to himself; but he was more anxious than ever to make the best report of what was to be found across the ocean. When news of his return reached the King and Queen they sent him a kind letter, and he went on to the court.

He was well received there, and gave a true account of what he had found, and still hoped to find; and showed the gold, toys, and a heavy collar and chain of gold, which had been taken from an Indian chief.

Columbus asked for eight new ships to carry on his

search in the west. These he was to have, but much delay took place.

War in Italy was going on, and the King of Spain was more eager to gain the city of Naples, so near at hand, than to reign over Indian tribes on the other side of the earth.

It had been a hard task to prove that a new world might be found ; and when all doubts were at an end, much patience was still needed to show the true worth of such a noble prize.

To add to all other causes of delay, the Queen had to mourn for the death of her only son, Prince Juan ; but after a time she again thought of Columbus. He loved the Queen with deep and grateful affection, and longed to do something which might cheer her under such deep sorrow. This made him patient to wait, and ready for action when she should desire it.

On the 30th of May, 1498, Columbus set out on his third voyage, with six ships. This time he meant to steer south-west. As he went on from clime to clime, the sudden changes of heat and cold brought on gout and fever ; but through all the time of sharp pain and illness his mind was clear, and he kept the log-book of the ship's way with his usual care.

They sailed on till the heat was very great, and not a breath of air was felt. They were in a dead sea-calm under the blazing sun. The ships began to leak, for every plank had shrunk ; the meat became bad, and the water-casks burst.

Columbus was obliged to steer to the north, till they met a cool breeze to fill the sails, and refresh the weary sailors.

They then sought for land, and in two days saw the tops of three high hills. It was an island not known to them, but to their great joy they saw a stream at which the water-casks could be filled. To this island they gave the name of Trinidad, on account of its three hills. They then sailed along its coast, and saw land to the south. It was the main-land so long looked for, but it was no part of India.

Columbus had reached the north of what we now call South America. A very small part of it now bears the name of Columbia. They saw Indians, but could not make friends with any of them. Owing to this, the ships moved on, and they met with new people amidst groves, laden with flowers and fruit. These natives were willing to give their gold and pearls in exchange for bells and toys of brass.

The mouth of a great river made Columbus sure that he had now seen the main land; but he could do no more; he was a cripple from gout and pain in his limbs, and almost blind from the strain on his sight, in over-watching and fatigue. The ship's stores were come to an end, and he was forced to hasten to refit at the town of Isabella.

Columbus got safe into port with a worn-out body, but a mind as clear as ever, and full of hope that his brother would soon be able to go out and confirm his report of land to the south. Columbus had need of respite from toil, but a new scene of trial was in store for him. Some of the people of Isabella were in a state of revolt, and these were joined by the crews of ships made up of bad men taken from the prisons in Spain.

Columbus could not bear the thought of bloodshed



DISCOVERY OF TRINIDAD.



amongst the white men, and in time he brought them all to order, taking no notice of insults shown to himself. He then sent his new treasures of gold and pearls, and the log-books with a full account, to the Queen of Spain. It was the use of this very log-book, some years after by a man named Amerigo or Americus, that took from Columbus the glory of giving his own name to half the world.

Columbus was too great and too noble to make any boast of his deeds, and he made no secret of the ways and means which led to them; but Americus knew how to dress up his account so well, that most men, at the time, thought he had been the first to see main-land, and very few people in Europe knew that this was false.

Columbus soon found out more evil work going on in the island than in the town of Isabella. At last he made up his mind to send all the bad, unruly men, back to Spain: it was the only way to keep peace; and he wrote to the King, praying him to send out good and sober subjects in place of the convicts, who had done so much harm. By the same ships many more letters were sent to Spain, written by those who bore Columbus no good-will for his stern acts of justice; and some of these letters went to those who had friends at court; while Columbus, to use his own words, was "absent, envied; and a stranger in the land."

When the ships had sailed, Columbus gave his whole time to the care of the island. While doing this his enemies had gained the ear of the King; and when Columbus wrote to entreat that a judge might be sent out, Bobadilla, a man not fit to be trusted, was chosen, and secret powers given him by means of blank letters

signed by the King and Queen. These letters he was to fill up with his own orders as he thought proper. Bobadilla reached St. Domingo on the 23rd of August, 1500, and soon made it known that he was to hold the highest rank in the island.

He went into the house of Columbus, who was then absent, and seized upon everything in it. When Columbus wrote to ask by what right this was done, a letter was sent him in the name of the King and Queen, with orders "to give up all rule to Bobadilla, and to obey him in all things." The news soon spread that a new master was come, and that Columbus was in disgrace. Bobadilla began to be afraid he had gone a little too far, when he heard the Admiral was on his way to the city. Columbus came without any guard; he was quite alone. He was at once seized, thrown into prison, and chains put on him.

This act towards one of his age and merit, was a shock even to the minds of the very worst men.

There is a noble scorn that swells the heart and keeps the voice silent, when truly great souls have to bear insult from the mean and sordid.

" Whom worldlings scorn,
Who lives forlorn,
On God's own word doth rest;
With heavenly light
His path is bright,
His lot among the blest."

Columbus could not stoop to reason with a man so weak and violent as Bobadilla; and, when ordered to send for his brothers, he wrote to beg they would come in peace. He told them to bear and forbear, trusting

for better times to come, when they should be sent back to Spain.



COLUMBUS UNDER ARREST.

Bartholomew and Diego came, but Bobadilla would not see them, nor let any one visit them in prison.

They did not know what list of false charges would be made up against them.

When an officer was sent to bring Columbus from prison to the ship in which he was to sail, he thought they were going to take his life without even the form of a trial by which he might clear his fame.

"Where," said the Admiral, "are you taking me?" "To go on board ship," was the reply. "To embark? Do you speak truth?"

"Yes," said the officer, "it is true."

This was comfort to the Admiral, and gave him strength to bear all else, for he might yet live to see the Queen, whom he knew to be just and kind. His brothers were put in chains, on board two other ships, so they could not see or speak to each other.

The Captain could not bear to see his Admiral in chains, and wanted to take them off, even at risk to himself. Columbus said, "I have the order of the Queen to submit to Bobadilla; he has put these chains upon me. I must wear them until they are taken off by the King and Queen. I will keep them for ever, to show what has been my reward." When Columbus arrived once more at Cadiz, as a captive and in chains, the news spread like wildfire, and stirred up every heart to do him justice. He wrote to a lady at court the full and true account of all he had suffered. The Queen sent word at once to set the three brothers free, and gave money to clothe them for coming to court in the style due to their rank and services.

At Granada they met the King and Queen; and when Isabella saw the aged man draw near, she thought of all she had borne for her sake, and wept

bitterly. Columbus saw this sign of feeling, and he could not utter a word, so great was the grief and struggle of his own soul.

Their kind words gave him cause to hope that full redress would be made, and that he should return in triumph to St. Domingo. Columbus waited more than nine months in the city of Granada. During that time he saw many young and active men go forth to seek fame in the very track he had laid down for them. He spent many hours in the study of the Bible, which gave strength to his mind; and his resolve still to try to find the "ends of the earth," towards which the "glad tidings" were to be spread, as foretold in the dark sayings of the prophets. He wrote a poem on this subject, and sent it to the Queen with a long letter. Her reply secured to Columbus his rank and all his rights. She asked him to leave his son in Spain, and assured him he might go forth again in peace, and with full trust in the favour of the court.

Columbus made two copies of the Queen's letter, one to take with him, and one to leave with his son Diego; for he knew how little faith could be put in the fair words of princes.

CHAPTER IX.

FOURTH AND LAST VOYAGE.

“Shipwreck'd upon a kingdom where no pity,
No friends, no hope, no kindred weep for me.”

SHAKESPEARE.

ON the 9th of May, 1502, Columbus set sail on his fourth and last voyage. He was old and infirm; but in mind clear and ardent, as in the prime of youth and strength.

His courage did not flag, for he had the aid of his brother Bartholomew, and could always rely upon his skill.

The wind was fair, and all went on smoothly until near the Isle of St. Domingo. Signs of a tempest forced them to ask leave to take shelter in the port; but this was refused, and all their advice was laughed to scorn in regard to the safety of a fleet just putting out to sea, with Bobadilla and a mass of his ill-gotten gold on board, the fruits of Indian toil and misery.

Columbus sought the best shelter the coast could afford for his ships, and soon the storm came on with dreadful fury.

When the gale was past, they heard with grief and awe that Bobadilla and all with him were lost at sea.

The only ship of that fleet which reached its port in safety, was the frail one in which the friends of Columbus had placed a few goods and chattels, saved by them when he was thrown into prison.

Columbus went on to seek new land amidst fairylike scenes of beauty, but the sky was often overcast, and storms made his ships so crazy, that he sought some place in which to refit them. They found a haven on a new and lovely isle, only just in time to escape utter shipwreck.

The place is still known as Christopher's Cove, and the island keeps its Indian name of Jamaica, their word for "land full of streams." The natives brought food, but Columbus had no means to mend his ships so as to be fit for sea.

One of his best men soon won the heart of a native by kind acts, and got a large canoe in change for the few gifts they could spare. Columbus looked upon this canoe as the only chance for saving the lives of his crew. He spoke to its owner, the brave Mendez, who was quite willing to risk his life at sea, rather than waste it on a strange shore.

Mendez set off in his canoe with some Indians to try and get a ship from the port of Isabella, while those left behind were to do as well as they could, and try to keep up the good-will of the natives for a supply of food. This was no easy matter when the white men had nothing left to give in return. Just at the time of their utmost need, an eclipse of the moon was about to take place, which Columbus knew of and foretold.

This raised the wonder of the natives and the respect of the crew, for whom the Indians again brought food enough to keep them from starving.

Thus we are sure to find a use for all we can learn. The old saying, that "*can do* is easy to carry about with us," is also true of all that we know.

Columbus had been taught to watch the moon and stars when a child, and he loved the same study when at school.

After eight long months had passed away, a ship was seen by Columbus and his party. It did not come near the shore, but a boat was sent off, from which they learnt the cruel news that no help would be given.

After four months more, of doubt, hope, and fear, two ships came in sight, and in one of them was the faithful Mendez, who had done all that man could to relieve his Admiral.

On the 28th of June, 1504, Columbus took a joyful leave of the wreck on which he had been so long pent up. Many Indians shed tears on parting with "the good white chief," whom they were never to see again. On the 18th of August he cast anchor at St. Domingo. Columbus had left it in chains, amidst the shouts and taunts of a mob hired to insult him. The bad man who caused this was dead, and better feelings were now called forth at sight of the worn-out and shipwrecked man, and much kindness was shown to him. The wish of Columbus was to return to Spain once more to see his son, and to look after his own affairs. He went on board a ship bound to Seville.

CHAPTER X.

DEATH OF COLUMBUS.

“Where are the mighty ones of ages past,
Who o’er the world their inspiration cast,
Whose memories stir our spirits like a blast?
Where are the dead?”

The spirits of the lost, whose deeds we sing,
Have perish’d not, they have but taken wing—
Changing an earthly for a heavenly spring.
There are the dead!”

AGED, and worn out by toil, Columbus looked to Seville as a haven of rest, but care and sorrow were still to be his portion on land, as at sea. His affairs in Spain had not been cared for, and all that he saved in the West had been spent by him for the sailors of his own ship, who were poor and in distress, owing to losses by shipwreck. When Columbus reached Seville he wrote to his son Diego,—“I can get nothing that is due to me, and I have to beg for daily food. So little have I gained by twenty years of service, with toil and peril, that I do not own a roof in Spain. To eat or sleep I must go to an inn, and I have no means wherewith to pay the bill.”

This was bad enough, but he was also deeply grieved at the neglect of the poor seamen, and again he wrote to Diego (still at court) to do all he could for them.

Columbus said, "They are very poor, and it is nearly three years since they left home. They have borne heavy trials and perils, and have brought tidings to make princes rejoice."

Some of the men in whose behalf he thus wrote were those who had many times done him much wrong. Columbus was very anxious to go to court himself; and a sort of bed-carriage was hired to take him there, but when it was at the door he could not get into it, and the journey was given up.

At this time the Queen was very ill. Besides her only son she had lost a daughter and grandchild, and she pined in sadness of heart amidst the pomp and state of a court. She died in November, 1504, in the fifty-fourth year of her age.

Columbus was writing to his much-loved Queen at the very hour of her death; and, with her life, all his hopes that justice would be done him were at an end. His own cares and troubles were fast drawing to a close. He wrote down many last wishes, even to the gift of a silver coin to a poor Jew in the city of Lisbon, with other such tokens of regard to any one who had ever shown him some small act of kindness in times long past.

In the same spirit he gave much good advice to his son Diego, and to the faithful Mendez, who nursed him tenderly.

His desire was, that the chains he had worn should be buried in his grave.

“So let them rest, the buried griefs,
 The place is holy where they lie;
 On life's cold waste their graves are placed,
 The flowers look upwards to the sky.”

On May 20th, 1506, this good and great man breathed his last.

The King did nothing to cheer the last hours of one who had served him until death; but after it, showed him honours in a way that did not cost much.

He gave orders to put up a stone, with words of this meaning,—

“COLUMBUS FOUND A NEW WORLD FOR SPAIN.”

Diego died in 1526, and was buried beside his father; but their bodies did not rest in peace, for the coffins were twice removed, and at last taken to Cuba, in the West Indies.

COLUMBUS.

From the German.

He stood upon the deck by night, alone,
 And heard th' uproarious waste of ocean moan
 Beneath the gusty darkness round him thrown.

The sighing winds amid his hair took way,
 And damp his beard and brow with briny spray,
 Yet steadfastly he watch'd the west alway;

Until at length he said: “It is a light—
 It must be—and on shore: so low, so bright,
 So steady. God be praised! Ho! land in sight!”

And soon throughout the crew from man to man,
In startling shouts the rapt'rous tidings ran ;
And wild for joy were they that light to scan.

No words can paint their triumph ; yet I ween,
Had night not veil'd his visage, they had seen
A bitter smile disturb his even mien.

The self-same tongue that, but few hours ago,
Had counsell'd straight return, and sought to show
The folly of his scheme, their certain woe ;

Vain upstarts who had jeer'd, aye, menaced him,
And faint hearts with desponding looks, and din,
All mix'd their rash breath with his soul's deep hymn

Exulting boastfully that they had shared
Success, which ne'er had been, had he not dared
Despise them, and hope on, when they despair'd.

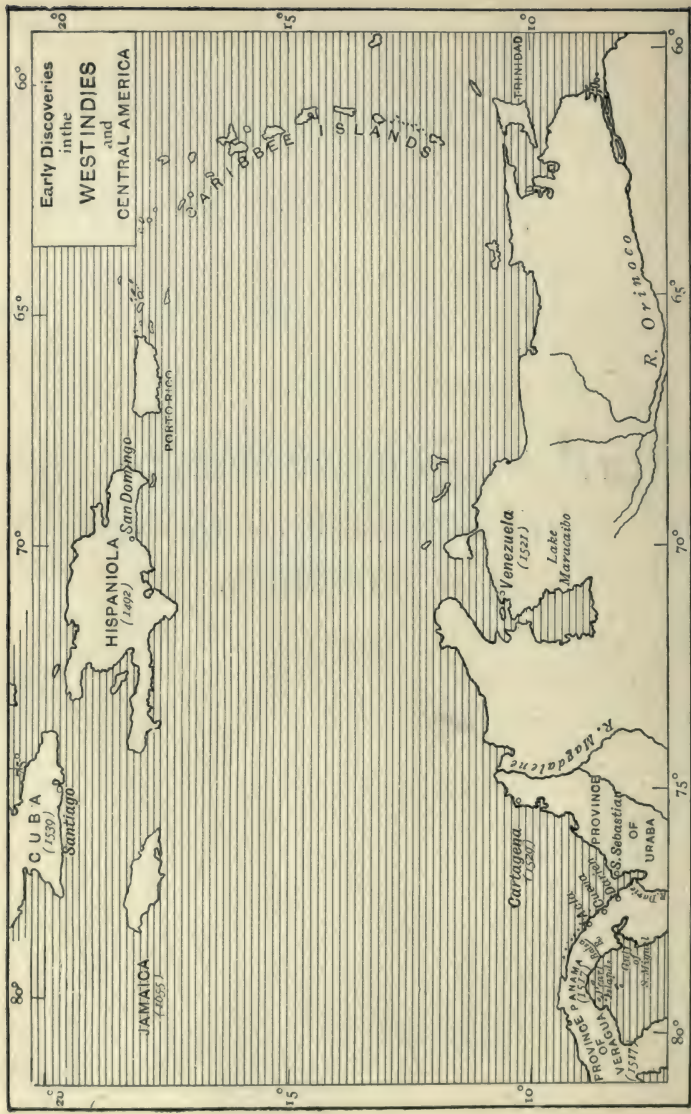
Within themselves the great must ever seek
Both impulse and reward—all else is weak
To what their own calm soul and conscience speak.

And thou—wouldst thou, Columbus-like, aspire
To walk new worlds of thought, and high and higher
Exalt thy humble soul on wings of fire ?

On God and on thyself do thou rely aright !
Then through the day His cloud shall cheer thy sight,
And His fire-pillar guide thy steps by night.

VOYAGES AND DISCOVERIES OF THE
COMPANIONS AND FOLLOWERS
OF COLUMBUS.

PART II.



VOYAGES AND DISCOVERIES OF THE
COMPANIONS AND FOLLOWERS
OF COLUMBUS.

ALONZO DE OJEDA.

7.

OF the brave sailors and soldiers who followed the great Columbus and shared his hardships, Alonzo de Ojeda (whose name is spoken as if it was spelt O-hay-da) must be named in the first rank.

Ojeda was brought up as a page in the princely household of a Spanish Duke. Here he was trained as a soldier from his boyhood. He was a good horseman, and though he was small he was very active and strong. As a proof of his strength, we are told that he threw an orange to the top of a tower at Seville which was two hundred and fifty feet high.

He was about twenty-one years of age when he sailed with Columbus on his second voyage, in the year 1493. At Hispaniola or St. Domingo Columbus was opposed by a brave native chief. He was the boldest of the Indian leaders, and Columbus wished very much to conquer him.

Ojeda asked leave of Columbus to visit this chief, taking with him his horse and some hand-cuffs, amongst other things. Now the Indians were afraid of horses, never having seen them before the arrival of the Spaniards, and they were pleased with the look of the fatal steel instruments which Ojeda carried.

When he had gone some distance Ojeda left his horse in a valley and walked to the huts of the Indians; and here he charmed the chief with the bright ornaments, and, drawing him on, he at last persuaded him to mount his horse; and then he quickly slipped on the handcuffs, and, leaping up behind the chief, was beyond the reach of the Indians in a very short time.

Such was the man who, with four vessels under his command, sailed from Port St. Mary near Cadiz, in on May 20, 1499. His chief mate, or pilot, as he was called, was Juan de la Cosa, who had sailed with Columbus.

It ought to be said here that, before this time, English sailors had been at work on the shores of North America, and had discovered the country still called New-found-land. From this point they had sailed along the American coast as far south as Florida; and this made the Spaniards all the more anxious to be before the sailors of other nations in the Southern Seas.

After sailing for twenty-four days, Ojeda's ships reached what is thought to have been the coast of Surinam; and, going along the coast, they came to the island of Trinidad, where they met with signs of the last visit of Columbus



ARRIVAL AT AN INDIAN VILLAGE.

After roving in these seas for some time, Ojeda arrived at a harbour, where he unloaded and mended his ships, and also built a new one. The natives were very friendly, and brought him fish, venison, and cassava bread, and helped the seamen in their work. In return, they asked Ojeda's men to help them to conquer the natives of a distant island who were cannibals, and who landed sometimes on their coast, and were very cruel.

Ojeda was quite ready to do this; and, taking some of the natives on board as guides, he set sail, and in seven days arrived at what is believed to be one of the Caribee Islands. When he came near he saw a great number of natives armed with bows and arrows, lances and shields, and their bodies were painted in a variety of colours, and they had gaudy feathers on their heads.

As the boats neared the shore a cloud of arrows fell around them, but little damage was done. The brave natives ran into the sea to meet their invaders, and tried to prevent their landing. But when the cannons were fired they ran away in great terror, and Ojeda and his men, leaping on shore, pursued them and killed a great many, and afterwards collected all the valuable things they could find, and, having set fire to the Indian houses, returned to their ships.

Ojeda stayed twenty days in this harbour, till his men had recovered from their wounds, and then he set sail. Still moving along the coast, he came, after some days, to a village in which the houses were bell-shaped, and built on piles driven into the ground beneath the shallow water. To this place Ojeda gave

the name of Venezuela, or Little Venice, because it was built on the water like the famous Italian city.

The Indians here received the Spaniards with seeming kindness; but suddenly, one day, they attacked them, and in the fight that followed the Spaniards took many of them prisoners.

At the harbour of St. Bartholomew, supposed to be the port now called by the Indian name of Maracaibo, the ships were received in a very friendly manner. The natives loaded the sailors with presents of feathers, weapons, birds, and animals. We are told that, whilst about a thousand of the Indians were on board the vessels at one time, Ojeda gave orders that cannons should be fired, and in an instant the Indians "plunged into the water like frogs from a bank." They soon returned, however, on finding that the noise was only a mark of rejoicing.

Ojeda returned to Spain shortly after this, arriving at Cadiz in June, 1500.

II.

About seven years later another expedition was made to America, partly to get riches from the gold-mines, and partly because many people thought they could get work in the new countries. Diego de Nicuesa, a gentleman of high birth, was made the governor of the western part of the newly discovered coast, whilst Ojeda was to have the command of the eastern part. But the two governors soon fell out and became enemies instead of friends.

The ships of Ojeda arrived at the harbour of Cartagena in the province of Uraba, of which he was

governor, after a pleasant voyage ; and, landing there, he took possession of the country in the name "of the most high and mighty sovereigns of Castile and Leon." He had on board a number of friars who had been sent to convert the savages, and one of them explained to the natives as best he could the nature of his mission, urging them to accept the Christian faith, and to submit to the Pope as their religious director, and the King of Spain as their earthly king. In case of their refusal, the friar told them that their houses would be destroyed, their property seized, and they themselves, with their wives and children, would be carried away as slaves.

As may readily be believed, the natives did not know what he meant ; and, as they had already suffered by the cruelty of the white men, they at once got ready for battle. A hard fight was carried on, with success changing from one side to the other ; but though the Indians were brave men their weapons were of little use against the Spaniards, and they were driven back into their woods. Ojeda followed them for twelve miles, burning their houses and carrying off all the gold on which he could lay his hands.

Towards the evening the Spaniards arrived at a village, and here, thinking that the Indians were quite beaten, they began to search for booty amongst the houses. All at once they were attacked by the savages, who rushed forth, with fearful yells, from all parts of the forest. It was a fatal moment, and the Spaniards, in spite of their efforts, were completely beaten by the number and bravery of the Indians, and hardly any of them got away alive.

The sailors who had been left on board the ships were troubled because the others did not return. They fired signal-guns, sailed along the shore in their boats, and sent scouts some distance on the island, who blew their trumpets; but no answer came save the war-whoop of the savage. At length, one day, when they had almost given up all hope, they caught sight of a man clad in Spanish clothes. He was hiding in a thicket of mangrove trees which grew near the sea. They made their way to the place where the man had been seen, and to their surprise they beheld Ojeda. He was so wasted with hunger and fatigue that he could not speak, and, in fact, they were just in time to save him from dying of hunger.

When he had revived he was greatly troubled to hear that Nicuesa's ships were just coming into the harbour, for he had quarrelled with him. He ordered his men to leave him on shore, to return to their vessels, and by no means to tell Nicuesa anything of him. But when the boats of Ojeda's ships went to meet the vessels which were coming near the shore, the first inquiry Nicuesa made was after the safety of his old comrade. He was told that he had gone on an expedition into the country, and that fears were felt for his safety. He was, moreover, asked to give his word that if Ojeda should really be in distress he would do nothing to revenge himself for their recent disputes.

Nicuesa was a man of brave and generous mind, and said, "Seek your commander instantly, bring him to me if he be alive, and I pledge myself not only to forget the past, but to treat him as if he were a brother."

After this four hundred men were landed, together with seven horses, and they set off to revenge their comrades, who had been killed at the fatal village. They arrived there at night, when the Indians were all asleep, and they cruelly set fire to their houses, and killed as many of them as they could. It was a very wicked crime, which no bravery or kindness of the Spaniards will ever atone for, and many of them suffered for their cruelty afterwards.

III.

Ojeda now wanted to go in search of the river Darien, as the Indians had told him that a great deal of gold was to be found there ; but his men had passed through so many dangers and sufferings that he could hardly get them to follow him. They heard at night around them the howlings of wild beasts ; and once they saw a large crocodile seize one of the horses by the leg as he walked along the banks of the river, and pull the animal under the water ; and they thought, too, how the poisoned arrows of the Indians could pierce even through their armour, and all these things had a great effect in making them out of spirit, and they wanted to rest in some quiet place.

At length Ojeda fixed upon a spot and built a fort, which he called San Sebastian, and from here he sent a ship to Hispaniola with the gold he had collected, and asking for all the men and provisions that could be spared.

The Spaniards were in great want of help, for the Indians attacked them whenever they could, and if

their arrows only scratched the Spaniards the poison caused them very great pain.

Ojeda had escaped being wounded for such a long time that the Indians thought he must have a charmed life ; but one day he was struck by an arrow, and his men carried him back to the fort in great grief, because they thought he must die ; but even now his courage did not fail him. He told the surgeon to make hot two plates of iron and hold them to the wound, in order, as he said, to burn out the poison. The surgeon would not do it at first, saying he would not murder his general ; but Ojeda made a solemn vow that he would have him killed unless he obeyed. Then the hot plates were put to the wound, and he bore the pain without a murmur, and really got better ; but it was never known whether the arrow which struck him was poisoned or not.

A ship came soon to the relief of the Spaniards, under the command of a man named Talavera. He was a bad man, who was in debt and in danger of being put in prison, and he thought this was a good chance of getting out of his troubles. For he knew that Ojeda was in need of men and provisions, and he easily persuaded some friends of his, who were as reckless as himself, to seize a vessel lying in a harbour in the western part of the island of Hispaniola, and set sail with her. She was laden with provisions, and the gang of Talavera, being seventy in number, easily overcame the crew.

The men at San Sebastian waited for many days, but no other vessel arrived there ; and, food again falling short, it was agreed that Ojeda should himself

go to San Domingo, and he set sail in the ship stolen by Talavera. He left as his lieutenant, a brave soldier named Francisco Pizarro.

On the voyage a quarrel arose between Ojeda and the gang, and Ojeda was put in irons. Then a great storm came, and the ship drifting about in the ocean, the crew were alarmed. They set Ojeda free again, knowing that he was the only man who could save them from being wrecked. He soon saw that their only chance of safety lay in running the ship ashore on the southern coast of Cuba.

Here their sufferings were very severe for the natives did not help them at all, and their life was one of fear and hardship.

It seemed to them that their only way of escape was to travel along the coast, not only in the hope of catching sight of a distant sail, but also to keep out of the way of the natives. But the soil on the coast was very soft and marshy, and they sank in sometimes knee deep, and it took them thirty days to cross one large bog.

Ojeda made a vow that if he got across safely he would build a chapel in the first Indian village he arrived at. There seemed little hope for him and his companions at the time, but at length, worn out and nearly at death's door, they reached an Indian village, and he did not forget his vow.

Ojeda at last got to San Domingo, and whilst he was waiting there, poor and ill, Talavera and his crew were brought there as prisoners. They were sent to trial on the charge of being pirates. Ojeda was called as a witness, and what he said clearly

proved that they were guilty. For this act, some of the friends of Talavera waylaid him at night, but he beat them off, and got away unhurt to his lodgings.

He went no more to sea however. Broken in spirit, and very poor, he stayed about San Domingo. One of the historians says he turned a monk and died in a monastery, but the Bishop Las Casas, who knew more of him than did any other man at that time, says nothing of this. He tells us that he was so poor when he died that he did not leave money enough to pay for his funeral.

VASCO NUNEZ.

THE DISCOVERER OF THE PACIFIC.

I.

AFTER Ojeda had left San Sebastian, Pizarro and his men waited for some time to see if he would come back; then they sailed away.

They soon met two vessels which Enciso, a friend of Ojeda's, was bringing with food, and arms, and other supplies for him.

Though Enciso was told that Ojeda had left, he went on to San Sebastian and made Pizarro and his men go back with him.

On one of his ships was a man named Vasco Nunez, a native of Xeres, in Spain. He had hidden himself on the ship at Hispaniola, for, being in debt, he wanted to escape secretly from that island; and in this way he came to the scenes in which he was to become famous.

When the ships arrived at San Sebastian, they found the fort destroyed. Food, too, became very scarce; they had to take it from the Indians, who fought well, and shot with poisoned arrows.

Many of the Spaniards, therefore, wanted to go

back, but now Vasco Nunez came to the front. He told them of fertile land near the river Darien, which he had visited once before. Here they found an Indian town, which they took by force; and in it they got both provisions and gold. This town, however, was in Nicuesa's province, Veragua, and troubles arose in consequence. In the first place, those who trusted Vasco Nunez wished to get rid of Enciso, their rightful commander, and secondly, there was a party in favour of Nicuesa, in whose land they now were, as their leader. In the end both Nicuesa and Enciso were sent away, and Vasco Nunez now became the leader of the band, and with him a better time began. He had taken as his wife a captive maid, the daughter of an Indian chief named Careta, whose town was more than a hundred miles from Darien, and for her sake Nunez treated the natives more kindly, whilst they in return showed him greater favours. Careta was a man of noble mind, and his conduct was worthy of a Christian hero.

Another Indian chief, named Comogre, was also friendly. His eldest son was a young man of noble mind. Hearing some Spaniards quarrelling one day about the division of some gold, the young chief struck the scales with his fist and scattered the gold. "Why," said he, "should you quarrel for such a trifle? If this gold is so precious to you that you leave your homes for it and invade the peaceful lands of others, I will tell you of a place where you may have as much as you want. Over these mountains," he added, pointing to them, "lies a mighty sea, which may be seen from their top. All the streams which flow into that sea are full of

gold, and the kings who reign upon its borders drink out of golden cups. Gold is as plentiful there as iron is among the Spaniards."

Vasco Nunez eagerly asked about the country and the tribes which dwelt in it, and, after learning all he could, he returned to Darien to get the means for a great expedition.

From there he wrote to Don Diego Columbus asking for aid in exploring the new country, the border of which he had just touched. He also sent him fifteen thousand crowns in gold for the king, and told him that at least a thousand men would be wanted for the work which lay before him.

Whilst waiting for the royal message, Vasco made many little journeys into the country round about, taking his ships up the great river now called the Atrato. In one district they came into the country of a chief, who lived with his people in what are called lake-dwellings. These were huts built in the trees growing on the lakes or marshes by which the country was cut up. The huts were well stocked with food, and each of them formed a house for a whole family. The natives reached them by means of ladders made of the long reeds growing on the coast, and as the ladders were drawn up at night or in times of danger, these dwellings made a safe refuge.

At this lake city then Vasco Nunez arrived, but the people would not receive him. They drew up their ladders, and when the Spaniards came near they threw stones down on them; but the Spaniards sheltered themselves with their shields and cut down some of the trees, and then the natives gave in. The chief,

with his wife and two children, were amongst the prisoners, and the latter were kept whilst the chief was sent away in search of gold. He never came back, however, and Vasco Nunez, leaving one of his friends named Hurtallo with thirty men, went back for a time to Darien with his other followers, not only to report what he had done, but to regain his health and that of his comrades.

During his absence many serious disputes had taken place amongst the Spaniards, who quarrelled like a shipwrecked crew on a raft which was too small to hold them.

But they soon found out what, indeed, some of them knew already, that Nunez was the only man amongst them who was fitted for the post of leader, and in a very short time he was recalled to his old command, after some of the restless ringleaders had been put in irons.

A new trouble now came upon him. He heard, in a private way, that an old enemy of his, namely, Enciso, whom he had sent away, had made a complaint about him to the king, and that he would soon have to go back to Spain to answer the charge.

He made up his mind, therefore, to set off quickly on his new expedition. He had no difficulty in getting one hundred and ninety men to go with him, and these he armed with swords, shields, and crossbows. He took with him also a number of bloodhounds. One of these animals, named Leoncico, belonged to Nunez himself, and always followed him. He was of middle size, but very strong, and of a dull yellow or reddish colour, with a black muzzle, and his body was

covered with scars received in battles. The Indians had a perfect horror of the brute, and the very sight of him is said to have sometimes put a host of them to flight. His services were counted in dividing the prize-money, and Vasco gained by him in this way a thousand crowns.

II.

This was the expedition which, on the 1st of September, 1513, set out under the command of Vasco Nunez, to discover the Pacific Ocean. He arrived first at Cueva, where lived the chief Careta, whose beautiful daughter he had received as a pledge of friendship. Here he was most kindly welcomed. He left half of his men to guard the ship and canoes, and on the 6th of September he set off for the mountains. Before setting out mass was said and prayers offered up for the success of the expedition.

On the 8th of September they arrived at a village where Ponca, an old enemy of Careta, lived. It was deserted; but they got Ponca to return to it, and he told the Spaniard many things which helped him on his journey. Here also he sent back his sick or weakly men, letting none but the strongest go with him.

His journey was a most toilsome one. In four days the expedition only travelled thirty miles, and the men suffered greatly from hunger. At this time he was attacked by some Indians; but the fire-arms and the bloodhounds quickly overcame the natives, who fled, leaving their chief and six hundred of his men dead on the field.

Vasco Nunez was now at the foot of the mountain, from which he believed he could see the Pacific Ocean. Sixty-seven men remained of the one hundred and ninety he set out with, and at the dawn of day, shortly after the battle with the Indians, they began to climb the height. About ten in the morning they had pushed their way through the thick forests and arrived at a clear and lofty height. Above them towered the bold mountain top, and beneath them a vast country of hill and valley; but no sea was yet visible.

At this place Vasco Nunez ordered his men to stop. No man, he said, should stir from his place. Then he climbed the mountain alone, and, with a beating heart, reached the top. Looking round, it was as if a new world burst on his sight. There the vast ocean, shining in the sun, was seen for the first time by the eyes of a European, and Vasco Nunez sank on his knees and poured out thanks to God, who had given him strength and perseverance enough to make that discovery.

Calling his people to him, "Behold," said he, "that glorious sight which we have so longed for. Let us give thanks to God that He has granted us this great honour. Let us pray to Him to guide and aid us to conquer the sea and land which we have found, and which Christian has never entered to preach the holy doctrine of salvation. As to yourselves, be as you have hitherto been, faithful and true to me, and by the favour of Christ you will become the richest Spaniards that have ever come to the Indies; you will render the greatest services to your king that ever servant rendered to his lord, and will

have the eternal glory of all that is here discovered, and converted to our holy Catholic faith.”

With Vasco Nunez and his men was a priest named Andres di Vara who, filled with joy at the view before him which promised to them all rich rewards, sung the hymn *Te Deum Laudamus*. It was a moment never to be forgotten. After days of battle, nights of watching, after toils, sufferings, hardships, perils past, hunger and weariness overcome—there lay the promised glory.

Vasco Nunez called upon those who were with him to witness that he took possession of all they could see, in the name of the sovereigns of Castile. He drew up a form which was signed by the sixty-seven persons present. He cut down a tree, which was made into a cross and fixed on the spot. A pile of stones was also heaped up, and the names of the sovereigns of Castile were carved on several of the trees. The Indians round the new comers looked on with wonder, helping to erect the cross and piling up the stones; but happily for their own comfort, never thinking that these were the signals of their own defeat and the loss of their native land.

These events took place on the 26th of September, 1513, so that the Spaniards were twenty days in travelling from the village where Careta lived to the top of the mountain. The same journey is now made in less than six days, but in the time of Nunez the paths, known only to the Indians, were often blocked by such barriers as are met with by travellers in all savage countries. The isthmus is not more than sixty miles in breadth at the widest part in this

district, and in some places, indeed, it is less than thirty, but the mountains are high and rugged, and the passes at that day were full of perils which a Spanish writer observes, "none but men of iron could have overcome."

III.

Vasco Nunez now set out in search of the gold-fields, but he was met at the very outset by a warlike chief named Chiapes, who with his numerous fighting men looked with scorn at the small body of the Spanish invaders. Chiapes at once forbade the strangers to set foot in his land; but Vasco, ordering his men to fire upon the foe and to let loose the blood-hounds, drove off the natives in a panic, and the country then lay almost at his mercy. Nunez made many prisoners, and ordered his men not to kill more than was needful, and in some cases he treated his prisoners kindly, making presents to them, and sending them back to their villages.

This kindly treatment of the captives worked wonders with the simple natives, and when Chiapes was told that the Spaniards only sought for the gold which the Indians lightly valued, he took with him five hundred pounds weight of the precious metal, which he gave to Vasco, receiving for it some beads, hawks' bells, and looking-glasses. It is said that the chief was much pleased with his bargain, and thought himself to be the richest king on that side of the mountain.

Nunez stayed at the village of Chiapes for several days, and sent out three scouting parties of twelve

men each to discover the easiest road to the sea. Pizarro, of whom we shall hear more afterwards, commanded one of the parties, Alonzo Martin being at the head of another. Alonzo Martin was the most successful. Coming to a beach, he saw two large canoes lying high and dry. There was no water in sight, and Martin remained for some time wondering why the boats should be in that place. The water, it seems, was about half a league off, but the tide, rising on that coast very quickly, covered the ground where the canoes were lying.

On this rapid change, Alonzo Martin stepped into one of the boats, calling upon his companions to witness that he was the first European who had ever floated on that sea. Another followed his example, and claimed the second place.

The party then returned to Vasco Nunez, who set out from the village where he had been staying, and taking with him twenty-six Spaniards, marched on the 29th of September, 1513. He arrived on the shores of a bay, which he named San Miguel, or St. Michael, because it was Michaelmas Day, and here the same thing befell as happened to the other party. The tide was out, and the shore was covered with mud; but after a while the water rose very quickly to the spot where the Spaniards were resting.

Upon this Vasco Nunez, with a banner in his hand, marched into the sea till the water reached above his knees, and took possession in the names of the "high and mighty monarchs Don Ferdinand and Donna Isabella, sovereigns of Castile, of Leon, and of Arragon," for whom he claimed possession "both now and

in all times, as long as the world lasts, and until the final day of judgment of all mankind."

No doubt these words were said with a real belief that they would come true, though we can smile at them now, when we see the power which crushed the Indians itself almost crushed by the hand of Time. Crosses were cut with knives and daggers on many of the trees, and thus the discovery was made solemn by the presence of the signs of earthly and heavenly power.

After resting his men and making his gold secure, Vasco planned a coast expedition, in which he was joined by the chief, Chiapes. He took sixty men in nine canoes, on the 17th of October, 1513. His Indian friend had told him that the stormy season was near, and advised him to delay his voyage, but Vasco would not listen to him. He was too eager to gather riches and fame, and his own men shared his wishes.

The Indian chief was, however, right in his warnings. The canoes had only reached the broad bosom of the gulf when the storm overtook them. The Indians managed to tie the canoes together to keep them afloat or to prevent them being upset. The best swimmers amongst them would have had little chance in that stormy sea, whose waves broke on the reefs with the roar of thunder; but they managed to keep afloat, and towards evening reached a small island where a quiet bay enabled them to land.

Here they rested, but before the night was far spent they met with another danger as great as that from which they had just escaped. The tide flowed into the bay where they now lay very quickly. In a

little while after they landed the water began to rise, and the howling of the waves together with the coming darkness made the stoutest heart give way to alarm. As rock after rock was covered the Spaniards rose to the higher ground before them, till they stood on the summit of the little island with the raging waves up to their girdles.

Then the water went down and the storm passed away. When the day dawned the sight was enough to chill Nunez himself. The canoes were broken, and much of their gold and food was lost. The leader of the party, however, urged his men to their work, and before many hours had passed over, the men returned to their boats, and steered their way from this unlucky island.

IV.

By nightfall the canoes reached the land in a corner of the gulf where a chief called Tumaco lived. His people had heard of the Spaniards, and would not receive them, but Nunez, who had managed to save his bloodhounds and his firearms, speedily put them to flight. The Spaniards found in the village a good quantity of gold and food, together with huge shells of mother-of-pearl and a great many pearls, some of which were of a large size.

By means of the Indians who accompanied Nunez, the chief Tumaco was brought back to the village, and the Spaniards became very friendly with his warriors. They gave each other presents, the Indian gifts being pearls and gold, those of the Spaniards were hand-bells, looking-glasses, and beads.

The pearls given by this friendly chief were greatly valued by the Spaniards, and thirty of the natives who were trained as divers showed their skill before some of their visitors.

The Indian chief, in reply to the questions of Nunez, told him that the coast before him continued onwards without end, that southwards there was much gold, and he moulded in clay the figures of certain animals, one of which was the lama, the native beast of burden of South America. The mention of the coast running westward filled Vasco Nunez with the desire to explore it.

To aid him in his voyage along the coast, Tumaco gave Vasco Nunez a large canoe formed from the trunk of a huge tree. The handles of the paddles were inlaid with pearls, and the boat was in fact a vessel of state.

On the 29th of October, 1513, he set out; and after sailing along the coast without adventure, they came back to climb the rugged mountains of Darien. During their journey they passed through the lands of a chief named Ponera, who was said to be very wealthy indeed, but as wicked and cruel as he was rich. It is possible that this character was given him by the Spaniards to excuse their treatment of him, but the accounts agree in speaking of his deformed and frightful look. When taken prisoner, he said he had no gold, nor could threats or tortures wring his secrets from him, if he had any. After maiming him, they threw him and his three companions to be torn to pieces and eaten by the

dogs. It was a deed of blood which will stain the fame of Nunez and his followers for ever.

The conduct of the chief to whose care the sick and wounded Spaniards had been left at the village of Chiapes was very different. A mountain chief had lodged and fed them, and made them a present of two thousand crowns in gold. When Vasco Nunez arrived, the chief came to him, and, taking him by the hand, said, "Behold, most brave and mighty chief, I bring thee thy companions safe and well, as they entered under my roof. May He who made the thunder and lightning, and who gives us the fruits of the earth, keep thee and thine in safety."

Fear of the invaders might have been the cause of the Indian's humility and kindness, but his conduct has more of pure religion in it than that of the armed soldiers from a Christian land.

At Darien Nunez wrote letters to the king, giving a full account of his great discoveries, and sending him the fifth part of the profits in gold, together with the largest and most precious pearls he had got. These he placed in the hands of an old and tried friend, Pedro Arbolancha, to take to Spain; and now the bold adventurer, together with his friends, felt that their fortune was secure.

It was too late, however. The ship which was to carry the tidings to Spain did not sail till March, and in the meantime Enciso had laid his complaints against Vasco Nunez before the king. The king thereon made Don Pedro Arias de Avila, commonly called Pedrarias, the governor at Darien, and hardly had he done so when other travellers returned with full infor-

mation and asking for a thousand men to complete the conquest of the new country.

Volunteers in great numbers poured in, and on the 12th of April, 1514, fifteen vessels, with more than two thousand fighting men on board, chosen chiefly from the rich upper classes, left Saint Lucar in Spain for "Golden Castile." The commander of this splendid expedition, it must be remembered, was to take the place of Nunez. To everyone connected with the adventures at Darien, rewards or promises were given; but to Vasco Nunez the king was stern and severe.

In a few days Pedro Arbolancha arrived on his mission from Nunez, and then the tide turned in his favour. Honours and rewards were heaped up and prepared for him, and the whole country sounded with his praises. He was regarded as scarcely second to Columbus, and the king being sorry for his harshness towards him, took counsel with Bishop Fonseca how to reward him for his splendid services.

v.

The affairs in the colony of Darien during this time were getting on well under the care of Nunez. The town he had built contained upwards of two hundred houses and cabins, in which were about five hundred Europeans, all men, and fifteen hundred Indians, men and women. Orchards and gardens had been laid out, sometimes journeys were made into the country round about, and on holidays the favourite games and amusements of the Spanish people were carried on. Tilting matches were a special source of amusement amongst the colonists. It is admitted that at this

time a Spaniard might go alone in perfect safety about the land, so completely had the natives been won over.

It was at this time that Pedrarias arrived as governor. He was received very well by Nunez, who said, "Tell Don Pedrarias Davila that he is welcome. I am glad of his safe arrival, and am ready, with all who are here, to obey his orders."

Pedrarias entered the new city at the head of two thousand well-armed men in shining armour and brocade, and he told Nunez that he was ordered by the king to treat him with favour and honour, and to be guided by his counsel. Vasco Nunez was quite won over by this address, and laid all his plans and discoveries before the new governor openly.

The new governor thus got all that he wanted, obtaining the honours and rewards justly due to Nunez. In a short while after his settlement, he opened an inquiry into the conduct of Nunez, acting, as he said, under the directions of the king. Nunez was tried and acquitted of all criminal charges, and the governor was unable to devise any open means of getting rid of his popular rival. Nunez was however deeply in debt, and Pedrarias made up his mind to keep him at Darien, exhaust his means, and annoy him by various law suits.

But a calamity was hanging over the new colony, which almost destroyed all their labour. The town of Darien lay in a deep valley with lofty hills all round, and the land about it was of such a nature that on digging to the depth of a foot brackish water would ooze forth. A fever broke out during

the hot summer of 1514, which nearly swept the colony, worn as it was by want of food and good water. In one month seven hundred of the men who followed Pedrarias died, and so feeble were those left that they had hardly strength to bury their dead. The governor then gave permission for all who wished to depart to take ship at once, and a large number left for Cuba or their native country.

Volumes might be filled with the escapes, trials, sufferings, and successes of the Spaniards; but we pass on to the events which have left a deep and lasting mark on the pages of history. In the year 1515 Vasco Nunez was made governor of the South Sea and of the provinces of Panama and Coyba. He was second in command to Pedrarias, who was however ordered to consult Nunez on all important public affairs.

The new plan was not a good one, but it was expected to put an end to the quarrels of the two commanders. Nunez and his friends were greatly pleased on hearing the news. The whole of the letters fell into the hands of Pedrarias, who kept back those for Vasco Nunez until he had arranged affairs on his own method, and it was only in consequence of the loud complaints of the Bishop of Darien, that right, or something like it, was done to the first discoverer of the Pacific Ocean.

Then his new honours were handed over to him, with the understanding that the titles alone were to be his reward. He was not to have any share in the actual government without the consent of Pedrarias, and though he thus had little actual power, his

friends and himself were, for the time, satisfied with the name of authority.

Nunez had, however, secretly sent a supposed friend, Andreas Garabito, to Cuba, to try to get fresh men, ships, and money, and at the moment of the quarrel between the two commanders, Garabito arrived off the coast with a ship well filled with men and stores.

All the fears of the governor Pedrarias were at once revived. He ordered Nunez to be seized and put in a wooden cage; but the Bishop of Darien again interfered, and Nunez was set at liberty, after binding himself to certain conditions. One of these was that Nunez should marry the daughter of Pedrarias. The young lady was then in Spain, but she was sent for, and the marriage was to take place on her arrival.

Vasco Nunez was then free, and once more famous and in a high position. He was allowed to build ships and to engage men, and a sum of money was given to him out of the royal treasury.

With a courage and perseverance which are to this day memorable, he began his work. The timber for his ships was felled and shaped at Acla on the shores of the Atlantic and dragged over the mountains to the river Balsa, on the shores of the Pacific. Many lives were lost in this labour. The Indians died in great numbers, but the Spaniards and the negroes stood the toil better, though probably they escaped the most dangerous part of the work. Moreover the wood thus dragged from the building yards at Acla was found to be worm-eaten and quite unfit for use, and the trees on the border of the river Darien were taken, as they might have been at first.

After great labour and perils, Nunez launched two vessels on the river Balsa, and when they were ready for sea he set sail for the Pearl Islands. Here he landed, meaning to build two vessels; but, after getting ready, he changed his mind and set off on a voyage eastward to a country which the Indians told him was full of riches.

VI.

Vasco Nunez was, at this moment, on his course for Peru, the land of riches, with which the name of Pizarro is for ever joined; but a change of wind drove him out of his course, and he steered for the mainland. Whilst refitting his ships he sent Garabito to Acla to meet the governor Pedrarias, with a request that provisions and men should be sent. Nunez had always thought Garabito was a staunch friend; but he was greatly deceived in him. Months before he was sent on this mission he had written secretly to Pedrarias, and there is too much reason to fear that he was plotting against Nunez, during all the time of his service with him.

As Nunez was hopefully looking on the bright side of his fortunes, a letter came from Pedrarias asking him to go to Acla. He set out at once, nor was he aware of the charges made against him till he was drawing near to Acla, when he was seized by a band of armed men under Francisco Pizarro, "the future conqueror of Peru." "How is this, Francesco?" said he; "is this the way you generally receive me?" There was no reply. The orders of Pizarro were precise, and his former commander was

taken in chains to Acla. Garabito, whom Vasco Nunez had always believed to be his friend, was in truth his deadly enemy.

The old governor Pedrarias seemed at first to pity Nunez, but in a short time he showed the true state of his feeling towards him. "If he has deserved death, let him suffer death," said he in reply to those who begged that mercy should be shown to Nunez. Nunez was charged with treason. It was urged against him that he intended to throw off his obedience to his king and set up an empire for himself, and various conversations reported by his supposed friend Andreas Garabito were told in support of the charge.

Nunez replied that he was quite unconscious of any offence against his king, and that neither in act nor in thought had he plotted against him. "If," said he, "I had been a rebel, or had meant to rebel, what was to prevent me doing it? I had four ships and three hundred brave men under my command, and an open sea before me. What had I to do but spread sail and press forward? In the innocence of my heart I came here directly at your request, and my reward is slander, indignity, and chains!"

These words, however, had no effect, true as they were, and the trial went forward. It was delayed a little, indeed, but Pedrarias was not to be softened, and the judge was forced to decide according to the strict letter of the law, giving sentence of death against Nunez and four of his officers. This was in the year 1517.

The execution took place in the public square of Acla. It is said that Pedrarias watched the prisoners

mounting the scaffold ; but he himself was hidden in a house built of reeds. Through the small openings in the sides of the house he was able to see all that passed.

On the way to the scaffold the public crier shouted aloud, " This is the punishment inflicted by command of the king and his lieutenant, Don Pedrarias Davila, on this man as a traitor and usurper of the lands of the crown." On hearing these words, Vasco Nunez angrily exclaimed, " It is false ; never did such a crime enter my mind. I have ever served my king with truth and loyalty, and sought to increase his kingdom."

Nunez was the first to suffer. He had often before borne great perils with bravery, now he met his last trial calmly. His head was cut from his body at one blow, and was set up on a pole in the market square for several days.

It was a strange and sad turn of fortune ; but the world now regards Vasco Nunez not as the conqueror, too often cruel and savage, nor as the culprit who suffered public execution for disobeying the orders of the king or his tyrannical lieutenant, but as the hero who followed in the footsteps of Columbus ; who longed to be the first to see the great western ocean ; and for whom, perhaps, the happiest moment of his life was when he had overcome all doubts and dangers, and saw his dreams fulfilled—and

' When, with eagle eyes,
He stared at the Pacific,—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise
Silent upon a peak in Darien."

PIZARRO

THE CONQUEROR OF PERU.

I.

FRANCISCO PIZARRO was born at Truxillo, in Spain, in the year 1470. Of his early life little is known, but he was one of those restless and hardy men, who are ever ready to join in any project where a fortune might be won, or a name made famous by daring deeds.

After serving with the first discoverers, he was left in command of San Sebastian for some time by Ojeda in 1510.

During some years he and two friends, one of whom was named Almagro, were farmers in Panama, where they became rich men, and in 1524 they used their money in fitting out some ships to go on a voyage in search of the riches which people said were to be found in Peru.

Pizarro set sail with eighty men, four horses, and two canoes. Almagro did not leave at that time, but joined Pizarro in the Southern Seas three months afterwards, and the third, Fernando, was to stay at Panama to keep supplies of food and other things ready for them.

A story is told that Pizarro, having called his men together on the sea-shore, drew his sword and marked a line with it on the sand. Then pointing the way southwards to Peru, he cried out, "Gentlemen, on that side are labour, hunger, thirst, fatigue, wounds, sickness, and all sorts of dangers to be undergone till life is ended. Those who have the courage to endure these things, and to be my faithful friends, let them pass the line. Those who feel themselves unworthy of so great an enterprise, let them go back to Panama, for I wish to force no man."

With a few faithful followers he sailed on, and came, after a time, to a place in Peru on the mainland.

It was a rich town, and they were much pleased with the sight of the gold and silver cups and bowls and other valuable things. They gave the natives many presents, and when they had got all the things they could collect, they sailed back again to Panama. This was in the year 1527.

After some time, three small ships were fitted out, and Pizarro started again with his four brothers and a force of 183 men.

At one place, where they founded the town called San Miguel, they were told about Ata-huallpa, the greatest and richest king in these parts, who lived in a well-peopled valley, whose chief town was called Cassa-marca.

On Friday, the 15th of November, 1532, the Spaniards entered the Indian town, and took up their position in the great square. In front of the square, and joined to it, in the direction of the plain, was a fortress, in which was a secret staircase and a

sally port connecting the fortress with the open country.

It was a very strong and well-arranged place for war, and the Spaniards took up the best positions while waiting for the visit of Ata-huallpa.

Next evening the Inca, as the king was called, came in great pomp to the town, with from five to six thousand men. They were unarmed; that is, they did not bring their lances, but under their tunics they carried small clubs, slings, and bags of stones. The Spaniards were all ready for the worst. The horsemen and foot soldiers were fully armed and at their posts.

On the entrance of the Indians, they were met by a priest, Father Vicente, who was with Pizarro. He bore a cross in one hand and a prayer-book in the other.

Father Vicente then made a long speech, in which he told the king about his religion, and said he must obey the Pope, submit to Charles V., and believe in Jesus Christ, or else, "you and all your Indians will be destroyed by our arms."

After the king had put some questions, he asked for the prayer-book. It was handed to him, but he could not open the clasp; and when Vicente moved forward to open it, the king, thinking his movement was rude, struck him on the arm, and forcing the book open, turned over some of the leaves, and then threw it five or six feet from him.

The priest went back to the Governor to tell him what had happened. Then Pizarro put on his armour, took his sword, and sent word to his brother Fernando.

The signal was given, the cannons were fired, the trumpets sounded, the horsemen rushed out, and the fight began.

It was a very cruel battle. Two thousand Indians lay killed in the square, the Inca was a prisoner, and his rule was completely overturned.

Next day Pizarro talked more with his prisoner, and told him that all the lands of Peru and the rest of the New World belonged to the Emperor Charles, and that he would have to pay a heavy ransom before he was set free. The king said he would fill the room with gold up to the height of a man and a half; that is, between eight and nine feet, and this ransom would be paid in two months.

Soon after this, Pizarro's brother, Fernando, was sent back to Spain with some of the gold and treasures. Reports were brought to Pizarro that Ata-huallpa had sent orders to his army to burn Cassa-marca by night.

The Indians, they said, were on the march, and the very hour of the attack was named, because Ata-huallpa would be put to death if he was not saved before that time.

Pizarro did not delay for a moment. Ata-huallpa was put on his trial. The charges brought against him were foolish enough, and such as might have been made by men who wanted to find an excuse for doing a wicked act.

Of course he was found guilty, and was condemned to be burnt alive, unless he was willing to become a Christian, when he would be put to death in a less cruel way.

When he was brought to the stake, he said he would become a Christian, and was baptized, so he was not burnt, but was strangled with the string of a cross-bow. His body was left in the great square all night, and in the morning was buried with pomp and ceremony, in the wooden church built by the Spaniards.

II.

After the death of Ata-huallpa, Pizarro made his way to the town of Cusco, which he took very easily. It was such a rich town, that when the booty was divided into 480 parts, each Spanish soldier got more than a thousand pounds of our present money. Amongst the plunder "were ten or twelve statues of figures, made of fine gold, as large as life."

In the meantime, Fernando Pizarro had reached Spain, and had been at the court of the Emperor Charles the Fifth. The result of this was that Pizarro received the title of Marquis, and to Almagro was given a governorship, which was to be called New Toledo, and to begin where the rule of Pizarro ended.

When this news reached Peru, Pizarro was at Truxillo, on the sea-coast, and to him the letters were of course carried. He did not let Almagro know directly that he had been made a governor, and Almagro heard of it first through someone else, and was hurt at what seemed to be a neglect of the honour due to him. Though the coldness which followed between the two chiefs passed away, Almagro did not forgive the brothers of Pizarro for their jealousy of him.

The new plan was carried out in this way: Almagro, as governor of New Toledo, went to subdue the country

round his district. Pizarro, the governor of New Castile, returned to complete his new town called Los Reyes. His brother Juan was left in command at Cusco.

Shortly after this Fernando Pizarro came back from Spain, and he was made governor of Cusco, in place of his brother Juan.

During this time the new Inca, or king, and an Indian named Villaoma, who was the High Priest, or filled such a position as did the Pope with the Spaniards, were in the city of Cusco. Secretly they were working against the Spaniards, though they were not suspected of doing so. On the 18th of April, 1536, the Inca, together with the High Priest, and many of the chiefs left Cusco, in order to perform the usual yearly rites at the tomb of the late Inca. They were, however, making plans for a revolt.

This movement was soon made known to Fernando Pizarro, who sent word to the Inca, telling him to return. It was too late, however. A great many chiefs had come together, and they made up their minds to drive the Spaniards out of Peru. They had been injured more deeply than words can tell. Wrongs and insults had been heaped on their religion, their families, and on all that men hold most dear; and they had, in truth, grown desperate.

Calling for two large golden vessels, the Inca ordered them to be filled with wine. Then he said, "I will not leave a Christian alive in this land, wherefore I intend in the first place to besiege Cusco. Whoever among you means to serve me in this plan has to stake his life upon it. Let him drink."

The chiefs and captains rose and drank, nor did they shrink from the vow they had made.

Fernando Pizarro, feeling that the Indians were on the eve of a great revolt, lost no time in attacking them. He followed them to the heights where they took refuge and killed great numbers of them. But the Indians were learning the art of war, and as the horses of the Spaniards were useful only on the plains, the Spaniards were forced at length to retire into the city of Cusco.

Cusco was a fine town. It was strongly built of stone and richly ornamented. Two streams ran through the city, and above it was a huge fortress.

The Spaniards held both the town and the fortress, but on the advice of Juan Pizarro they left the fortress because it was unwise to divide their small force, and the Indians took possession of it.

The hostile parties were now in battle array. Cruel and bloody as the Spaniards had been, it is difficult not to admire their courage. They had before them a hundred thousand warriors whose bravery had been proved in battle, whilst they had only ninety horsemen, with a few foot soldiers, and one or two thousand Indians who were friendly.

For six days the battle raged round the walls and in the streets of Cusco. The wind blowing across the town carried the fire from roof to roof, whilst the cries of the wounded and the shouts of the fighting men filled the air.

Many of the Spaniards wished to fly, but Fernando Pizarro said, "I do not know, señores, why you wish to do this, for, in my mind, there is not, and there has

not been, any cause for fear. It would be," he continued, "a sad tale to tell of me were it to be said that Fernando Pizarro, from any motive of fear, had left the territory which his brother, Don Francisco Pizarro, had conquered."

His coolness had a great effect in cheering the men, and now he told them that they must gain the fortress.

Early in the morning Juan Pizarro, with his brother Gonzalo and a cavalier named Fernando Ponce, chose fifty horsemen. They were obliged to move some distance from the city before they could find a position from which the fortress could be attacked, for so many holes had been dug in the ground by the Indians, and so many barricades thrown up, that there was little hope of taking it except by going round on the far side of it.

Fernando had given strict orders that his brother should not, on any account, assault the fortress till night, and also begged him not to take part in the fight himself. Juan had been wounded, and could not put on his helmet, and without it fighting would be little short of madness.

Juan did not, however, heed the caution, either in the one case or the other. Seeing the Indians careless in their guard, he gave orders for a sudden attack. But the Indians were on the alert, and met their foes in such numbers that the Spaniards could not get on. Juan rushed to their rescue with such fury that the Indians were driven back step by step till they found themselves under the walls of the stronghold.

This position was an outwork with low walls round

it, but open at the top. The ridge of the wall was protected, so that the men inside were safe, while they could throw arrows and stones down on their foes.

It was here that Juan Pizarro fell. A stone from the wall fell on his head and laid him senseless on the ground. He was borne off the field alive, and he lay for a few days on his couch, from which, however, he never rose again.

That day the Spaniards were beaten back at all points; but the next day Fernando Pizarro spent in making ladders with which he hoped to climb up into the fortress.

When the ladders were ready an attack was ordered in the evening. This attack lasted for thirty hours without stopping, and stones and darts began to grow scarce amongst the Indians. The High Priest, Villaoma, got frightened, and taking with him some of his friends, he escaped from the fortress by a secret passage. When he got outside he withdrew his part of the army from the camp, and this act of cowardice and treachery helped the work of Pizarro very much.

The Inca who in a pledge of wine made a solemn vow to drive out the Spanish Christians, was now left in command. A Spanish writer says of him, "There is not written of any Roman such a deed as he did." On foot the whole time, he was fighting the Spaniards or striking down any of his own people who showed sign of giving way. He had been twice wounded, but he heeded it not. When the ladders enabled the Spaniards to enter the fortress, he, to show his rage, took earth in his hands, bit it and rubbed his face with it, "with such signs of distress and

heart sickness as cannot be told." Then, mad with grief and despair, he leaped from the wall upon the foe, and died true to the vow he had made.

All resistance was over. The garrison, numbering fifteen hundred men, was put to the sword.

Next day, and for several days, the slaughter went on. The record is sickening—but it is a true one.

The Spaniards floated into their conquest on a sea of blood, which, however, also swept away their honour and their good name.

III.

Meanwhile Francisco Pizarro was at Los Reyes, but not by any means so hardly pressed as his brother. Fifty thousand Indians came against the town. They forced their way over the walls and into the streets, and their general, lance in hand, led them on. But the success of the Spaniards was quick and complete. Their horses and their firearms won an easy victory. The Indians even fled from the hills where they had taken refuge as soon as Pizarro advanced against them, and all regular native resistance was over in Peru, and the conquest of the country may be said to have been complete.

We must now turn to Almagro, who had been made ruler of the province of New Toledo. There seems to have been some doubt whether the town of Cusco came in his district or that of Pizarro, and a quarrel arose between them about it. Pizarro tried to settle the matter quietly, but in vain, and Almagro led his soldiers against the town.

A truce was made for a short time to try if they

could not come to terms; but Almagro acted very meanly and attacked the town in the middle of the night and took it.

His success, however did not last long, and, after more fighting, Cusco was taken again by Fernando Pizarro, and Almagro himself was made prisoner. At first he was treated kindly enough, but when a plot was got up by one of his old generals to release him, Fernando felt that he would never be at peace whilst Almagro was alive. A council was hastily called, and he was condemned to death and executed.

Almagro was buried with great pomp, and the brothers Fernando and Gonzalo Pizarro put on mourning for the dead Marshal of Peru.

Fernando's career in Peru ended about this time. He was ordered to Spain, to give an account to the Emperor of all that had been done in Peru, and on his arrival in his own country he was charged with the death of Almagro. Being found guilty, he was thrown into prison, where he remained twenty-three years, after which he was set free, and retired to his country house, and died at the great age of one hundred years.

The Marquis Pizarro was now the only ruler in Peru, but his position was not an easy one.

Almagro's men were then very needy and discontented. At their head was Juan de Rada, a daring soldier, who had been chief of the household of Almagro.

A great many insults passed between the two parties. One morning a gibbet was put up in Los Reyes with three ropes hanging from it. The upper

end of one of them was made to point at the palace of the Marquis, and the others to the houses of his secretary and the mayor.

A very bitter feeling underlay this rough jesting. It was said on one side that Juan de Rada was buying a coat-of-mail. On the other it was found out that Pizarro was buying lances.

The Marquis Pizarro sent at once for Juan de Rada. "What is this, Juan de Rada," he said, "that they tell me of your buying arms to kill me?" "It is true, my lord," said de Rada, "that I have bought a coat-of-mail to defend myself, but that is because your lordship is buying lances to slay us."

The Marquis was greatly hurt to hear these charges. "Would to God," said he, "the judge were here, so that these things have an end, and that God may make the truth manifest."

Juan de Rada was as deeply moved as was the governor, and they parted with many friendly words, de Rada kissing the hand of Pizarro on leaving.

Still warnings kept coming to Pizarro, but he did not take much notice of them.

On Sunday, June 26th, 1541, when mass was over, the rebels collected in the house of Don Diego Almagro. Juan de Rada was asleep when a soldier came in and cried out, "What are you about? In two hours' time they are coming to cut us in pieces."

Juan de Rada sprang from his bed, and, arming himself, he called on his followers to avenge the death of Almagro. A white flag was hung from the window as a signal to their friends that they should come and help.

At the house of Pizarro the dinner was just over when some Indians rushed in to tell the governor what was passing. Francesco de Chaves ran to shut the door of the hall, but the conspirators came on him, and slew him on the stairs. Doctor Velasquez, one of the governor's guests, and some of the servants escaped from the window and saved themselves. Pizarro had time to put on his armour and to seize a spear. By his side were his half-brother Francesco, two of his friends, and two pages.

Pizarro was at this time seventy years of age, but his courage was as high as ever. "Kill him! kill him!" shrieked the rebels, but he still was able to defend himself. His two guests and the pages fell by his side, yet Pizarro still kept his enemies at bay till a wound in the throat brought him to the ground.

Lying there at the point of death, it is said, he made the sign of a cross on the ground and kissed it. Then he feebly asked for a confessor, but one of the rebels dashed a jug in his face, and the stern conqueror of Peru breathed his last.

LIST OF SPELLINGS.

COLUMBUS.

I.
Génoa.
Pávia.
combing
Portugal
stealth

II.
stranger
warfare
people
laughed
cardinal
presence
strength
Salamanca
ignorant
before-hand
Málaga
answer
Granáda
Alhambra
Córdöva

III.
dismay
eightñ

courage
inspector
surgeon
forebodings

IV.
compass
pelicans
relief
overcome
unworthy.

V.
clothing
scarlet
knelt
weapons
canoe
guest
Bahāmas
anxious
usage
weighed

VI.
resolved
shoals

visitors
welcome
conscience

VII.
Barcelōna
dignity
Dominica
worthless
butterflies
tortoises
bloodhounds
bloodshed
hurricane
lightning

VIII
Bobadilla
Trinidad
réspite
redress
triumph

IX.
chattels
shipwreck
eclipse

ALONZO DE OJEDA.

I.
Hispaniōla
ornaments
persuaded
discovered
venison
valuable

Venezuela
Maracaibo

II.
expedition

mangrove
quarrelled

III.
crocodile
lieutenant
companions

VASCO NUNEZ.

I.
Poisoned
quarrelling
plentiful
ringleaders

II.
perseverance
possession

III.
numerous
league
Michaelmas

sovereigns
discovery

IV.
accompanied
warriors
character
humility
wring
adventurer
volunteers

V.
brocade
acquitted

calamity
understanding
government
authority
perseverance
memorable

VI.
obedience
conversations
unconscious
indignity
lieutenant
loyalty

PIZARRO.

I.
Conqueror
Panamá
valuable
enterprise
condemned
ceremony

II.
governorship
jealousy
territory
barricades
stronghold

III.
discontented
secretary
mayor
conspirators

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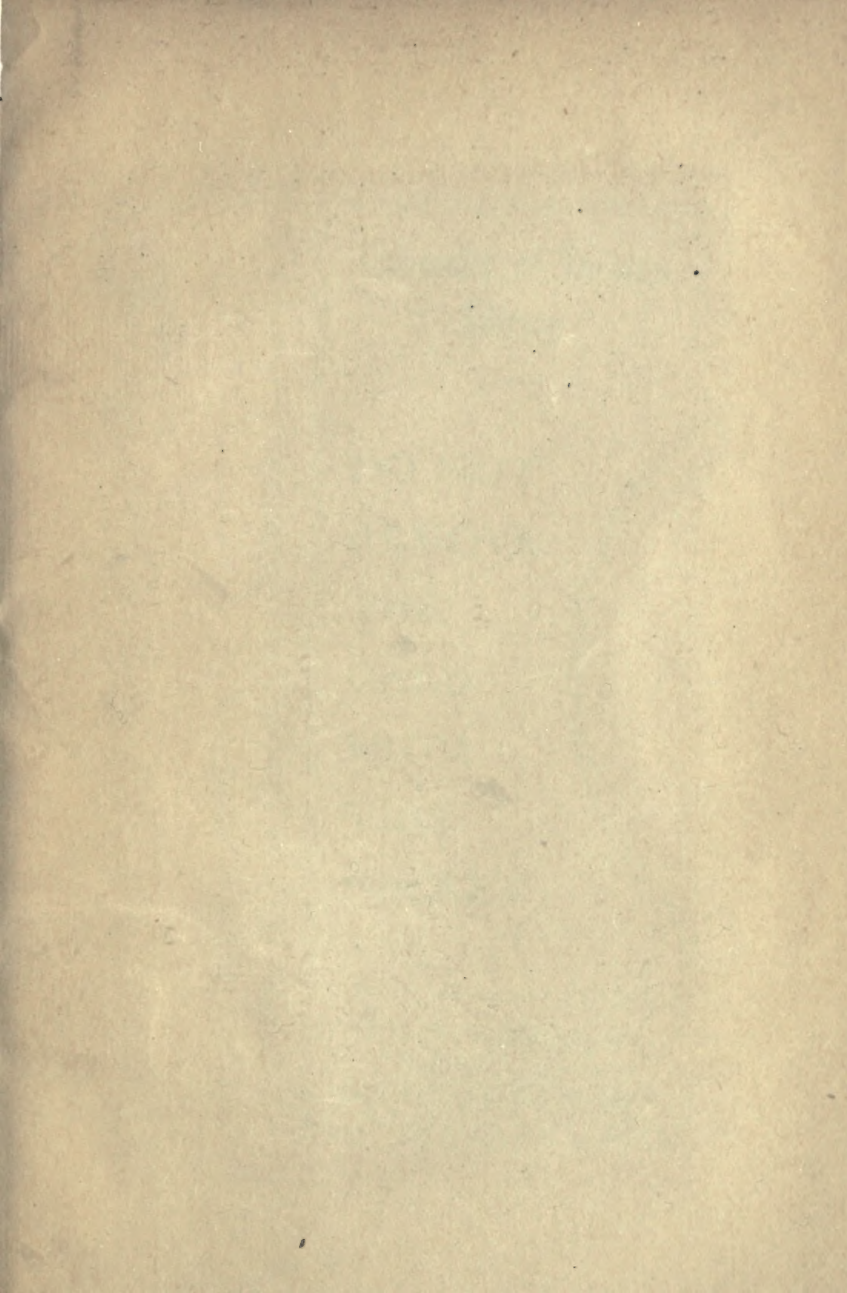
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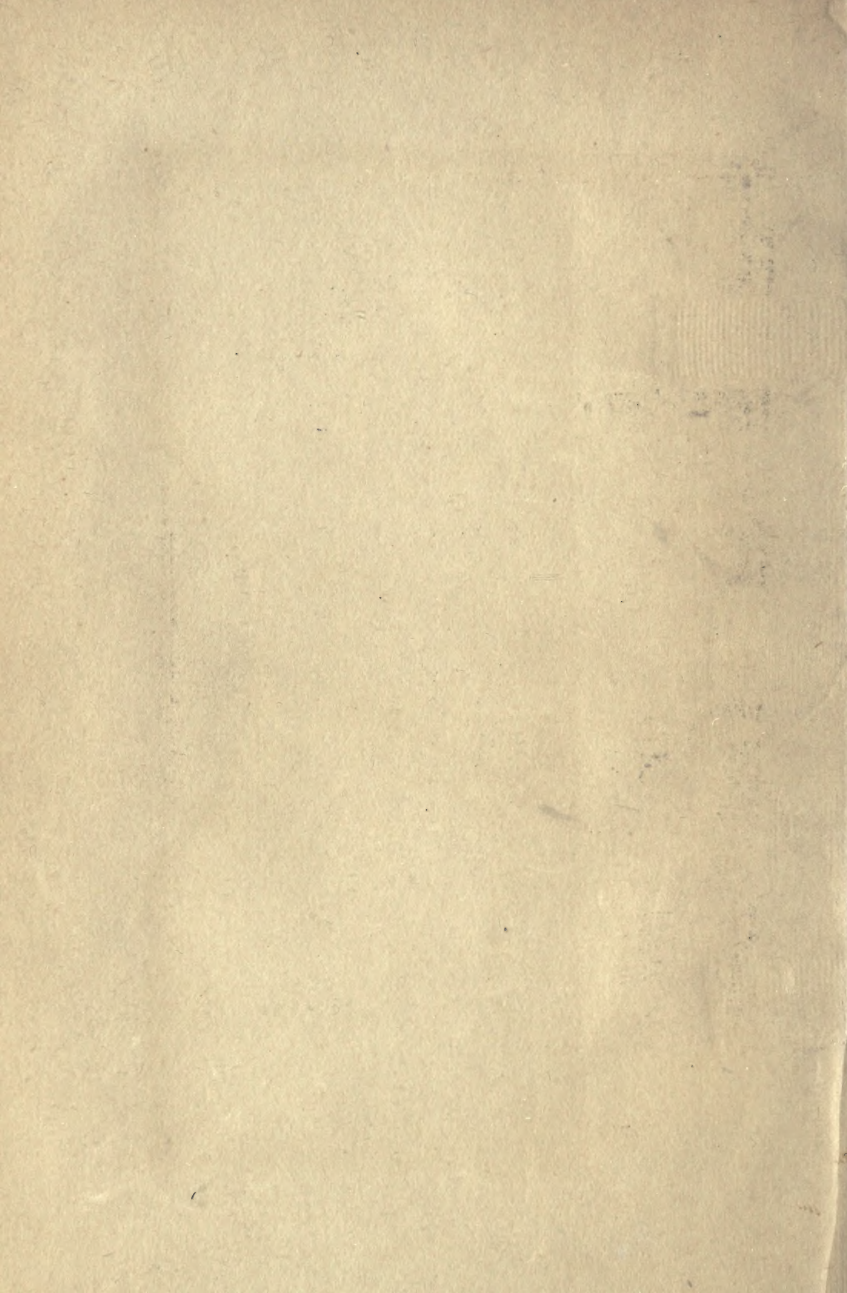
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